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yorld FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

(Incorporating "Cinema Quarterly")

LY VOLUME 1, No. 1: APRIL 1936 PRICE 6d.

TISSE-EISENSTEIN

TELEVISION MANIFESTO

WHAT MUSIC FOR FILM?

SETTING DOLLS IN MOTION

THE SCANDAL OF QUOTA

HARLES LAUGHTON: The Public My Partner

PEOPLE WITH PURPOSES

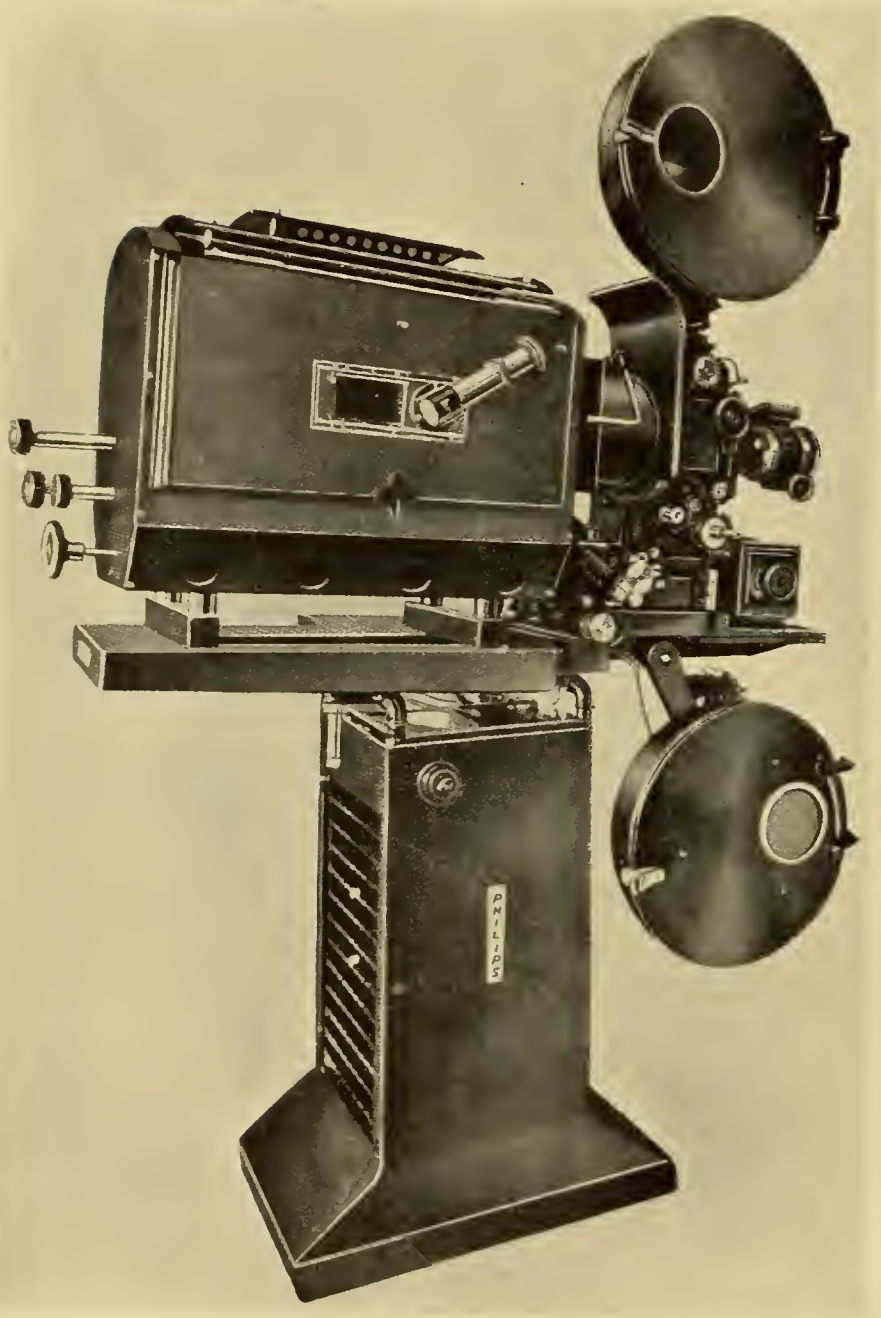
EISENSTEIN'S NEW FILM

IND THE SCENES

ANCIAL ASPECTS

TOON BY VICKY

PHILIPS SOUND-FILM EQUIPMENT



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Every night the postal train winds out of Euston on its run to Glasgow, gathering its cargo of mail-bags and dropping its sorted packets at sleepy stations.

Each morning as it reaches Glasgow it has written a film story immeasurably exciting. The night mail is perfect film material. I would like to think of it being shown on every screen in the country. (*Sunday Dispatch*).

ASK FOR "THE NIGHT MAIL" AT YOUR CINEMA

Here is one of the most absorbing films I have ever seen and one which will fascinate thousands of film-goers. (*Morning Post*).

A FINE JOB

Basil Wright and Harry Watt have made a fine job of this film with the co-operation of the workers of the Travelling Post Office and of the L.M.S.

A fluent and excellently recorded sound background creates a sustained impression of speed and movement; and many of the shots of expresses speeding through farmland and manufacturing centres, mainly in the half-light of dawn, are exceedingly beautiful. (*The Cinema*)

DON'T MISS IT!

"THE NIGHT MAIL"

(In two reels)

A G.P.O. FILM

Produced by BASIL WRIGHT and HARRY WATT
Supervised by JOHN GRIERSON

Distributed by
ASSOCIATED BRITISH FILM DISTRIBUTORS LTD.
A.T.P. House, 169-171, Oxford Street, W.1 and branches

world FILM news
AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)
FIRST NUMBER Editor H. N. FELD. Associate Editor NORMAN WILSON. APRIL 1936

THE PUBLIC MY PARTNER says LAUGHTON

The common fallacy of the director is to consider the screen alone as his medium for the art of cinema. My experience as an actor convinces me that it is most important for the director to have his audience always in mind when directing.

The audience is an integral part of any presentation, and the director and actor must consider it as if actually "on the scene." The audience reaction must not hinder the development and flow of a film; the audience must help it along in the way the director intended. Therefore it is essential for the director to be so well aware of how his stuff will go over that always in the "set" of his subconscious imagination, sits the audience before his scene and action.

Without a public there can be no art at all.

Imagine yourself caught up in a crowd watching a spectacle that arouses the same intense emotion in the majority of the people. Whatever your attitude you cannot be indifferent. Emotion is aroused in you, whether it be hatred for their emotion or sympathy with it. At all events you cannot help but recognise the mass sentiment. So when directing you must use this telepathic factor to the film's advantage. The real audience looks *with* a film, not *at* it.

THE IMAGINARY AUDIENCE

Yet, paradoxically, I prefer to act for the screen because I am not deterred by the presence of the people in front. I do not have to estimate the emphasis from moment to moment and performance to performance in relation to them. I am able to imagine an audience and how I am making it react.

In my part of Captain Bligh in *Mutiny on the Bounty* I had the idea of communicating not only a character, but I hoped also to mould in my audience an idea of the early days of Empire. In *If I Had a Million* I wished to shape the audience to a sense of expectation and make it completely ready to savour the culminating gesture—the employee's raspberry to his chief when fortune arrives.

As an almost perfect example of gauging audience reaction take Leo McCarey's handling of Laurel and Hardy. In one of their gags in an early film, Hardy, tripped by Laurel, falls face-first into an angel-cake. The sequence justifies its seventy-foot length because there are three laughs in it, as McCarey had foreseen: the first against Hardy, the second on the audience's common understanding of Hardy's unspoken thoughts, the third in expectation of Hardy's action concerning Laurel.

THE FILM SOCIETY AUDIENCE

The documentary film *Song of Ceylon* I regard as failing to consider the audience. In an argument I was challenged that the film gripped at a Film Society audience. But, in my opinion, the Film Society is not really an audience, for its interests are the separate and specialised interests of each member. It is interested in experiment, in technical fireworks: so interested in these surface effects that it is not reactive to essential drama.

If *Song of Ceylon* is tested as essential drama—away from the specialised interests of technique and sound experiment—it fails. Its sound and its images are very interestingly combined, but when the sound band is doing one thing and the visual band another, the film speaks with two voices. Whatever the effects, they should speak in one voice—a voice that develops a continuous story in the mind and heart of the audience.

TIME MARCHES ON

Arrangements have been made for the *March of Time*, the new American news-reel, to incorporate British subjects. De Rochement, European representative of the reel, informs *WFN* that ten stories have been planned and that one will appear in each monthly issue.

A production unit is in course of formation. Arthur Elton, a documentary director, moves over into news-reel to direct the first item.

March of Time, with circulation in four thousand American theatres behind it, brings a new technique and a more serious consideration to the handling of news, and has commanded wide attention from British film critics. The usual stop press technique of the average news-reel—based on a policy of brevity, humour and diversity—is discarded for a more serious editorial attitude to news events. This reel is an offshoot from the celebrated American journal *Time*, which provides a weekly digest of the world's news.

March of Time technique involves a strong informative commentary on subjects of wide political or social interest. The rise of the *Croix de Feu* in France, the character of Huey Long, the international race for air routes, the armaments racket, death on the road and the British shipping industry are typical themes selected for treatment.

Principal facts are given and co-ordinated in a telling revelation of political motives and personalities behind the scenes.

Opinions vary on whether the somewhat sensational style of the American reel is suitable for British presentation. Already certain items have failed to pass the more rigid censorship controls obtaining in this country and objection is taken to the opinionated style of American commentary.

WFN expects that in the English version *March of Time* will approximate to the recognised style of English editorial, that editorial statement will be less direct, and a less sensational atmosphere of presentation will be sought. Recent visits of editorial chiefs from the U.S. confirm on this point, and promise effective changes.

The *March of Time* technique suggests the journalistic possibilities of many subjects now handled exclusively by documentary directors. Advances in research, technical and commercial progress, national and social problems may be expected to receive considered attention, where warranted by news value and public interest.

ASYLUM for NEGATIVES

The formation of an international film library in the United States by Iris Barry—council member of the London Film Society, and one-time film correspondent to the *Daily Mail*—is interesting many European directors. Her plan is to register negatives of all available classics at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. There is Rockefeller backing for the scheme and prints will be made available to students of cinema throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Films asked for in Great Britain include early films by Hitchcock, recent Korda and Bergner works, and the best of the documentary films. Continental directors troubled by the changing fortunes of the film industry and by national political difficulties are glad of the opportunity to register their masterpieces outside the war area. This unexpected and pathetic reflection of European uncertainties is likely to strengthen the Barry collection considerably.

The English Speaking Union and the British Ambassador at Washington are backing the scheme so far as British films are concerned.

THE BRITISH

The SCANDAL of QUOTA

The operation of the quota act is causing widespread dissatisfaction and anger in the film world. The act forces renters to carry a 20 percentage of British films, and exhibitors to show a 20 percentage. The principal complaint is that this act for the protection of British films shuts the door of distribution to many British films of recognised quality.

M.P.'s and others are beginning to show concern at the damage done to the national interest by the act's anomalies, and *WFN* offers the following information for their guidance.

As the act stands any film which deals with current events, national scenery and scenes of industry or of nature may not be considered British. This has the effect of cutting out all actuality films.

Renters of non-British films may not make up their quota with this class of subject. Distribution has thereby been prevented for such first-class interest films as The Key to Scotland *and* Beside the Seaside.

EXHIBITION VALUE

Exception is made where the film can demonstrate special exhibition value, but unexpected difficulties are encountered in proving a case to the Board of Trade.

The necessary Press notices for proof of exhibition value involve a première, and renters are unwilling to provide the necessary première until quota is secured. This hen-and-egg dilemma is, in most cases, impassable.

Appeal to the Board of Trade involves consideration by an advisory committee. Complaints are rife that the committee does not see the films presented for their decision and that judgment on subject matter without consideration of treatment is inadequate and unjust.

One Gilbertian anomaly of the act is that, owing to successful court action by the producer of a film dealing with war memorials, shots of buildings are admitted for quota, but not shots of British streets or British scenery. Scottish interests have particularly objected to the stopping of an important national film like *Key to Scotland* by an English committee. In this case a protest over the signatures of the majority of recognised British documentary directors was addressed to the Board of Trade, without result.

BAR TO DEVELOPMENT

It is widely held that the administration of the act effectively sabotages both the production and distribution of films of national interest, and prevents a greater supply of films dealing with British traditions and British achievements in industry and commerce.

Only short films under three reels may qualify for shorts quota, but the F.B.I are rumoured to have considered recently a proposal that, in view of the famine of shorts, long dramatic films of the notorious quota type should be permitted to qualify for shorts quota. It is believed that this scandalous suggestion was very appropriately turned down.

A new act seems to be necessary to relieve effectively an intolerable position, but in the meantime moves are on foot to secure a more just administration of the excepting clauses of the act.

The British Film Institute and the film section of the F.B.I. have now proposals under consideration for new approaches to the Board of Trade. It is believed that the Board of Trade officials are sympathetic to a revision of the act. More bitter quarters of opinion demand action now within the terms of the act, and suggest that films should not be turned down quite unseen by the advisory committee.

In future numbers of "WFN", Cedric Belfrage and Molly Castle, who are leaving for a world tour, will contribute special articles.

BRUCKNER SCRIPT FOR KORDA

In acquiring for London Film Productions Ltd. the rights of the original film script, "Gloriana" by Ferdinand Bruckner, Alexander Korda has brought a new author to pictures. Bruckner, an Austrian by birth, is one of the most important and successful authors on the continent. In pre-Hitlerian times Bruckner was a leader of the German Theatre. His plays were translated into many languages and widely performed.

In London *Elizabeth of England* (translated by Ashley Dukes) ran, in 1931, for more than five months at the Cambridge Theatre, and two years ago the Gate Theatre produced *Sickness of Youth*. Last year the proposed performance of *Race* was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain, a ban which drew forth a protest resolution of the Pen-Club at a meeting in Edinburgh.

The author, now forty years old, lives in strict seclusion. For many years it was unknown, even in Berlin and Vienna, who Bruckner was. The newspapers promised high prices for his identification, detectives hunted for him, and a Berlin journalist even tried the trick of pretending to be Bruckner, hoping that the playwright would then give away his secret. With the exception of a few private friends, among them Max Reinhardt, who produced all Bruckner's plays, only his manager, the Berlin editor, S. Fischer, was informed of the author's identity.

For long Bruckner did not attend the rehearsals of his plays, nor did he go officially to his premières. It was only after his greatest international successes that he showed himself—at the première of his *Timon* (adapted from Shakespeare's tragedy) in the Vienna Burgtheater.

It was not easy to persuade Bruckner to write for pictures. He had declined the most alluring offers from Ufa and Hollywood. But after a talk with Alexander Korda, which took place last summer, he consented to write his first film script. Flora Robson will play Queen Elizabeth, Lawrence Olivier a young adventurer, and Conrad Veidt King Philip of Spain. The picture is scheduled for production at Denham.

TECHNICIANS ORGANISE

The Association of Ciné-Technicians was formed three years ago. After a somewhat chequered career, in January 1935 a small group of energetic members reorganised it and a new secretary, George H. Elvin, was appointed. Since then the Association has made considerable progress. There are now eight hundred members, and representatives in every studio. Several studios are 100 per cent strong.

The A.C.T. is the only organisation catering exclusively for film technicians in the art, sound, camera, stills, editing, scenario, and production departments. There are also sections for newsreel, laboratory and television workers.

The Association, while recognising the peculiar nature of the film industry, is endeavouring to obtain a standardisation of employment conditions. This applies particularly to minimum salaries, overtime for lower grade workers, and payment for Sunday work.

ATTITUDE TO ALIENS

A.C.T. co-operates with the authorities as much as possible in regard to the issuing of working permits to foreign technicians. While not objecting to ace men, the Association endeavours to prevent British technicians being displaced by second-rate foreigners.

The Association also runs an employment bureau which is used by many of the major companies. In addition, lectures and film shows are organised and *The Journal of the Association of Ciné-Technicians* published every quarter.

From the progress made in 1935, A.C.T. is becoming an important influence in British films. By the end of this year it will be completely representative of the technical side of the industry.

FILM

COME ON STEVE!

New cartoon expert discusses his competitors

Only God and the circulation manager of the *Sunday Express* know how many people weekly chuckle over Steve, the comic-strip horse. Roland Davies, creator of this mischievous character, is going to put him into films.

Tucked away in Ipswich, as far from Wardour Street as can be conveniently managed, *World Film News* called on this energetic young man. Last year, he and two apprentices made four thousand drawings and produced an animated cartoon full of possibilities.

Roland Davies has no artistic pretensions; fast movement and slap-stick comedy are his aim. His first attempt has action and robust humour, but as yet the continuity is weak and the timing unsteady. Now, with increased staff, he is busy on a film that will make his competitors sit up. He is using black and white for two very good reasons. Firstly, Steve is known to his public in black and white, and secondly anything but the best colour is more of a hindrance than a help.

TOO MUCH DIALOGUE

We discussed the only other British cartoon units of any consequence: Anson Dyer and his Sam series, and Anthony Gross and Hector Hoppin, Alexander Korda's group. Mr. Davies dwelt on their merits: "Dyer's animation is very good. The cartoon contains humour and the synchronisation is perfect. But the trouble is that it depends too much on dialogue." Roland Davies developed this theme: "The animated cartoon must be alive and full of speed and action. Dialogue necessarily limits action and that is why Steve himself will never speak."

"How would you compare the Sam cartoon with Steve?" we asked. His answer was interesting. "Anson Dyer is allowing stage difficulties to enter into screen possibilities. In cinema the scope is enormous. Time and space are no obstacles. Steve will try and grab every opportunity cinema has to offer."

DISNEY THE MASTER

"And how about Korda's group?" "From an artistic point of view their work is brilliant, but I'm afraid the cartoons will appeal only to a specialised audience. Disney, the master, has built up the public's interest in cartoon. Anything so outside the Disney tradition will take years to get general appreciation. Most cartoonists say that they must be different from Disney. It is ridiculous. Disney has proved himself to be a magnificent artist, humorist, satirist, and technician. The field is still large enough to hold many more like Disney. The art can be of a different shade, the humour of a different flavour, and the satire of a different edge. But let us, while not imitating Disney, accept all he has taught us."

In a converted house, Roland Davies and his right-hand man, John Rudkin Hubbard, are working at top pressure. The music track and every incidental sound effect are charted up before any key drawings are made. Roland Davies himself does these key drawings. He has no ambition to be the "boss." He believes in group working and group thinking, and judging from results he has the right idea.

FLEET STREET BLUES

Roland Davies started in art school, became a lithographer, then a free-lance. He made a considerable reputation as a motor-car and motor-racing artist. Steve's birth was sudden and accidental. He developed out of some aimless scribbling one wet afternoon.

He was taken to the *Evening News* offices and kept there. In a week, he was returned with a friendly note of thanks and regrets. Steve then called on the *Evening Standard*. That was much quicker. Very little thanks and no regrets at all. Roland Davies still had a sneaking idea that Steve was funny so he took him to the *Daily Express*. They were sorry . . . they had a comic-strip artist under contract . . . why not try the *Sunday Express*? So away they went and in twenty minutes the whole thing was settled. That was four years ago and Steve is still going strong.

FACTS AND FANTASIES

Thorold Dickenson is planning a series of intimate film revues called *Facts and Fantasies*, to be made on a co-operative basis. He himself will be the producer of the series.

The aim of the venture is to provide an outlet for the expression of new film ideas in an entertaining form. All kinds of essays in trick and natural photography will be included.

Among the contributors to the first issue will be:

Alexei Alexeieff, working in the new medium which he has perfected since he made his experimental film, *Night on The Bare Mountain;*
McKnight Kauffer in collaboration with Man Ray;
Karl Koch;
Len Lye;
Lotte Reiniger;
Basil Wright;
and others.

A later production will include a new film designed and executed by Berthold Bartosch, with music by Arthur Honegger. This film, now approaching completion, is probably the most elaborate, two-dimensional trick-film yet attempted. The photography is partly black and white and partly in Gasparcolour, and the work involves in some scenes as many as ten exposures on each image or frame.

The first revue, consisting of some half-dozen items, will occupy about forty-five minutes in running time. The production will be designed to appeal to audiences interested in fresh ideas, and will have a special interest for "news-reel" and other short-subject theatres.

MUST COLOUR FOLLOW NATURE

Alex Strasser, well-known Continental director-cameraman, is working with Humphrey Jennings on the development of Gasparcolour. He describes some of his difficulties to "WFN"

Colour film processes aim at correct reproduction of coloured objects. Theoretically all the colours of the spectrum can be recreated under ideal conditions. In practice many difficulties arise. An absolutely correct exposure is essential, and it is more important and more difficult to solve than in black-and-white film. Exposure meters are useless, as coloured filters are fitted to the lenses and the set is often lit with coloured light. Test shots are indispensable, as under- or over-exposure will alter the tone and quality of the colours. Faulty exposure can produce completely different colours.

Faulty exposure can be avoided after considerable experience but there is no latitude, and slight variations occurring within "correct" exposure range are very noticeable. Matching the lighting of close-ups with mid-shots or long shots is difficult in black and white, but jumps are not so noticeable since all differences lie within the grey scale. In colour, jumps such as these not only mean a change of tone but also of colour, so that great care must be taken to avoid the heroine's dress changing colour every few feet.

So we have to aim at continuity of colour as well as continuity of action, dialogue and music. Correct exposure is not the only factor in achieving good colour results. Many other influences play their part during the shooting of a colour film scene, *e.g.*, questions of lighting, problems of stock sensitivity to colour mixtures (in coloured objects as well as in coloured lighting), relationship of colour in and out of focus, relationship of even light and high lights. What has been said here only touches the question of "colour truth" and "colour continuity," but further problems arise in every colour film studio. It will be a long time before the film director can work with the same minute precision in colour as he does today with sound and black-and-white photography. There is still a great deal of unreliability and chance in colour camera work (with the exception of colour cartoon films, in which the conditions of shooting are altogether simpler), but these difficulties may lead to the creative use of colour outside the obvious ideal of "truth to nature."

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"Entertainment films are merely monstrous documentaries of actors at work."
Karl Koch.

"You can't have too much of animals and the Zoo."
Gerald Cock, as reported in television interview for *Observer*.

"Sometimes, when I consider this sleek industry of ours, I grow potentially violent. I am tempted to arson, garrotting and mayhem."
C. A. Lejeune.

MARKETS

VOL AU VENT FINANCIÈRE

Last year the French Cinema Industry reached a record low level. Total all-French productions for 1935 were only 109 films, as compared with 126 in 1934 and 157 in 1935.

No less than 83 firms were engaged on production of this meagre number of films, which means that most companies can only make one film a year. The maximum product from a single firm in 1935 was five films, and these mostly for distribution by Paramount, an American firm.

Financial figures quoted by a *WFN* Paris correspondent from *Cinématographie Française* and the Petsche report, tell the same story.

The result is, in general, that out of every three French films only one makes a profit, one may make its cost, and one flops completely.

Meantime American interests continue to cash in on the slump. The product of dubbed films has, in fact, increased from 143 in 1933 to 251 in 1935. Of these 193 were of American origin.

Dubbed films in France are limited by law to 188 a year (the present excess over this figure is due to large numbers of films passed in previous years being held over till 1935).

French producers can do nothing to prevent this sort of dumping. The Petsche report points out that the French market needs 300 films a year. French producers cannot get near this.

American firms claim that as the law compels them to do their dubbing in France, they are actually preventing excess of unemployment among artists and technicians.

G.F.F.A. Situation

Since the failure of the Banque Nationale de Crédit, the State has become principal creditor of Gaumont-Franco-Film-Aubert to the tune of 266 million francs.

Offers of reorganisation from a big group of bankers, from Fasquelle—noted publisher—in conjunction with Thompson-Houston, and even, it is said, from M.G.M., have all failed owing to the enormous liabilities involved.

Trade Vetoes State Action

French official quarters planned not merely to bolster up G.F.F.A. but to reorganise the entire industry as well. Maurice Petsche—former Undersecretary of State—issued a report, on which a series of decrees were planned. These, it was said, included a clause forbidding production unless 60 per cent. of the estimated costs were paid up before shooting, a tax on foreign films, and a central film fund ("Fond du Cinema"), obtained from royalties collected at the box office by the Association des Auteurs de Film. With unusual unanimity, the entire industry protested, and prevented ratification of most of the decrees.

1933:		
228 new firms add capital..	70,259,000 frs.	
Increase of capital by existing firms	3,430,000 frs.	
Total ..	73,689,000 frs.	
Losses through reductions of capital, bankruptcy, etc...	23,125,000 frs.	
Balance	50,564,000 frs.	
1934:		
202 new firms add capital..	20,034,000 frs.	
Increase of capital by existing firms	817,200 frs.	
Total ..	20,851,200 frs.	
Losses through:		
Reductions of capital ..	2,200,000 frs.	
Bankruptcies, etc., of 88 firms*	160,000,000 frs.	
	162,200,000 frs.	

(*The losses of Haik, Osso, G.F.F.A.: 130,000,000 frs.)

	Losses ..	162,000,000 frs.
	Increases	20,851,200 frs.
		141,148,800 frs.
1935:		
158 firms add capital of ..	17,327,000 frs.	
Increases of capital.. ..	9,802,500 frs.	
	27,129,500 frs.	
Losses through:		
Reductions	1,350,000 frs.	
Bankruptcies, etc. ..	10,426,000 frs.	
	11,776,000 frs.	
	Increases	27,129,000 frs.
	Losses ..	11,776,000 frs.
		15,353,000 frs.

FILM FINANCE IN GERMANY

At a recent conference, attended by all the officials of German film departments, it was pointed out that the government had no intention of monopolising film production, and that the Ministry of Propaganda would, on the contrary, prefer to see more private capital interested in the German film industry.

These declarations underline what previous developments had already indicated: that there is strong competition between two German film concerns, Ufa and Tobis. Ufa still belongs to the former Minister Hugenberg, but his political influence has vanished.

The Tobis company has recently been taken over by the Reich. So the government is, in fact, controlling not only such firms as Rota, Europe and Syndicate Films—which formerly produced nearly 50 per cent. of the independent German productions—but supervises, too, the rest of the former free-lance productions. Tobis being the only sound system allowed in Germany, the government influence cannot be denied. It is interesting, therefore, to learn that recently Tobis itself has announced the founding of its own producing company called Magna film. It seems that Reich activity in film increases.

THE GERMAN FILMBANK

It has now become difficult to make films in Germany. Firstly, production costs have increased, on an average, about 60 per cent. Capital is very scarce and the only possibility of getting financial backing is from the Filmbank. It is to this Filmbank that all applications have to be made. Ufa, last citadel of monarchist reaction, has its own method of getting financial backing, but the economic condition of this concern, according to its most recent report sheet, is bad. Syndicate Films get credit from the Reichskredit Gesellschaft for their productions. The rest of the film industry has to turn for financial backing to the Filmbank.

On the Board of the Bank, which is run as a limited company with no obligation to publish its balance sheets, are directors of large German banks. Before producers can get credit it is necessary for them to apply to the Reichsfilm Dramaturg, an official department led by reliable members of the Nazi party, for approval of the synopsis. A few months ago the censorship of scripts was abolished but, in actual fact, it is impossible to get credit from the Filmbank until the Nazi Dramaturg has accepted the content of the film.

MULTIPLE CENSORSHIP

Another application has to be made should a company want to be supervised by the Reichsfilm Dramaturg during the production. This does not mean that on completion the film will necessarily be passed by the Board of Censors. It must not be forgotten that there are warring partners and that a film approved by one may be refused permission by the other. For instance, in a film adapted from a novel by Selma Lagerlof, the action of which took place in the country, there were two peasant families. The first family had one son, the second family one daughter. The Ministry of Agriculture objected to the film on the grounds that good Aryan peasants have not one child but several, and a great deal of hard work was necessary before the film was passed.

PRODUCTION OBSTACLES

Costs for a medium-sized production in Germany average about £25,000. The producer generally gets in advance a guarantee of 60 or 70 per cent, *i.e.*, about £15,000. He may get another £2,000 or £3,000 for the sale outright in foreign countries. Therefore about £5,000 to £7,000 is still to be brought in. But as the producer must have the agreement of Reichsfilm Dramaturg and the Dramaturg of the Filmbank before he gets credit, it takes a long time and a lot of money before he can really start. Needless to say, the necessity of getting consent from the different officials means a considerable number of changes in the film.

If, finally, the producer happens to overcome all these obstacles, he gets bills from the distributors and on these bills can obtain money from the Filmbank. But there is a final condition. He has not only to pay 1 per cent. over the usual discount rates of the Reichsbank, *i.e.* 5½ per cent., but he has to pay an extra commission to the Filmbank amounting to 4 per cent. of the credit he is asking for. As the Filmbank is financing about eighty films a year, its interest income amounts to about £50,000 or £65,000 with very little risk.

WORLD OF FILMS

ATTEMPT TO SABOTAGE BRUSSELS EXHIBITION

At a February meeting in Berlin of the FIPRESCI (Federation Internationale de la Presse Cinematographique), Italian, German and French delegates made a combined attempt to prevent future meetings of the Brussels Film Festival.

Film producers of many countries welcomed the successful inauguration of this international film competition at Brussels in 1935. Its organisers intend to repeat it periodically.

"The committee draws the vigilant attention of the FIPRESCI to those without official authority who attempt to organise so-called 'international' film exhibitions in any country."

This was the resolution passed by the Italian, German and French delegates. Mussolini's organisation, the IIEC, is said to have manœuvered this result.

They further demanded that, in future, the papers relating to proposed international exhibitions should be forwarded to the FIPRESCI in order to avoid overlapping of activities and in order to check on the official standing of the organisers.

The Belgian delegates abstained from voting.

In Brussels the resolution was read as an attempt to restrict international film competitions to the Biennial Exhibition at Venice. It evoked a storm of protest, accompanied by strong feeling that the Belgian delegates to Berlin should have taken a firmer stand.

The majority of members of the Belgian Screen Press Association demanded the withdrawal of Belgium from the FIPRESCI. One section of British opinion strongly favours the independent attitude of the Belgian delegation.

They express dissatisfaction with the organisation of previous festivals run by the IIEC.

WAR THREATENS VENICE EXHIBITION

Will the 1937 Venice Exhibition of Cinematography be an international exhibition?

This is the poser facing the organisers of the biennial Venice film congress.

Italian opinion maintains that the Italo-Abyssinian situation will not affect the congress.

But the impression is that Venice will not see many European films. A correspondent of the Berlin *Weltkunst* writes:—

"It is unlikely that the Italian adventure in East Africa will be terminated this summer. It is, therefore, highly improbable that France, England or Russia will take part in the Exhibition."

"WAR IS HELL" DIRECTOR JOINS SCHACH

Victor Trivas is coming to England. He directed *War is Hell*, a film which commanded wide attention when shown in England three years ago, and suggested how, by symbolical use of the film medium, great subjects could be cheaply expressed. This young Russian art-director began his career as the author of the script of *The Brothers Karamazov*—not a bad start.

Then he became a director. His first production was known as *War is Hell*. It was an indictment of war, made by four soldiers of different nationalities who met in a ruined dug-out between the trenches. Trivas then went to Paris. He started work on a revolutionaryidea; an adaptation of Victor Hugo's novel "1793." The project fell through. He became a director again. Using unknown actors, Trivas made a success, *Dans la Rue*. After that he wrote scripts for Granowsky, director of *Moscow Nights*, and others.

Now Trivas is coming to this country. Max Schach has engaged him to direct for Capitol Films. What will be his first English film? A novel by the Russian poet, Pushkin, or a modern theme? One thing is certain. Trivas will stamp every film he handles with his remarkable personality.

AUDIOSCOPIKS

An experiment in the three-dimensional screen, in the shape of a short colour trick film, will be shown in London shortly. It is called *Audioscopiks* and marks another step in the progress of the cinema. When the film is run at the Empire shortly the public will be given spectacles through which to view it, with one lens red and the other green. Without the spectacles the film would appear a colour blur.

No longer are figures bounded by the two dimensions of the screen. Not only do they have the advantages of a stage production, but they can project themselves toward the audience. When a girl swings, she swings out toward you and her feet seem in close proximity with your head.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, producers of the film, will not try a feature film until further invention has overcome the need of spectacles.

A similar solution of the stereoscopic problem has been frightening audiences of the Casino de Paris for some months.

NEWS FROM ABROAD

Berlin has started telephone-television transmission for the Leipzig Fair. Telephone-television transmission costs approximately 5s. for three minutes.

Mussolini told Leni Riefenstahl, during an audience accorded her in Rome, that before he had seen *Triumph of the Will*, a film of the Nazi Congress in Nuremberg, he had no belief in realist films.

Wilfred Basse, director of the realist film *Germany Yesterday and To-day*, is working on an educational film series for the Ministry of Culture of the German Government.

The film rights of Sinclair Lewis' anti-fascist novel, *It Can't Happen Here*, cost approximately £50,000. The film will not be made.

La Garçonne, Victor Marguerite's sensational novel, which has been made into a film, has aroused strong demands for censorship in Paris.

Switzerland plans to build studios and produce films.

The Quai d'Orsay Foreign Secretary in France runs his own propaganda film organisation. During last year, this unit distributed in foreign countries 139 pictures, most of which were actuality films.

In Copenhagen, Paul Fejos, director of Annabella's Hungarian film *Marie*, is still cutting the material of his Madagascar actuality film.

The social documentary of Mexican fishermen, *Pescados*, photographed by Paul Strand, has been completed, and is now being shown in Mexico City. The music was written by the leading modern Mexican composer, Revueltas.

The inventor of the "Leica" camera, Barnach, has died in Berlin.

In Prague, a realist film *Intellectual Revolution*, has created wide discussion. It compares the 1918 bloodless revolution in Czecho-Slovakia with events in Germany and other countries. The film was directed by J. A. Holman.

Zoltan Korda is leaving presently for Jerusalem to take some shots for the Lawrence of Arabia film, *Revolt in The Desert*. His technical adviser is Colonel Stirling, Lawrence's Chief of Staff during the campaign.

Egypt has made its first operetta film *Wehdad* in the new Misr Studios at Cairo.

BROADCASTING

GILLIAM QUIZZED — PLANS AND AMBITIONS OF B.B.C. ACTUALITY

Laurence Gilliam, producer of the B.B.C. actuality programmes, the radio equivalent of documentary films, is 28. Coming down from Peterhouse, Cambridge, in 1928, he spent three years in the H.M.V. works, learning the trade. There followed a year of free-lance journalism, ending with a permanent job on the *Radio Times* as feature-writer. He transferred to Drama Department in October, 1933, where he at once began his present task of bringing the real thing to the microphone in constructive form.

Major productions include the Christmas Day programmes of 1933 and 1934, the Jubilee programme "Twenty-five Years," and the summary of 1935, "Twelve Months Back."

Last November the G.P.O. group of documentary film directors invited Gilliam to give them a

special relay of a new actuality programme as a starting-point for a mutual discussion of working methods.

Gilliam outlined the early history of broadcast actuality. Reality, he said, came to the microphone in three ways: straight representation of public events, landline relays from specific localities, and magazine items staged in the studio such as the "In Town To-night" series. The feature-actuality emerged as a combination and extension of these three methods.

Gilliam emphasised the early difficulties of assembling raw material by landline relay and steel-tape recording. A creative approach to sound recording became possible with the acquisition of a mobile recording van equipped with disc-cutting apparatus. This enabled the producer to direct his own recording on the spot. Disc recording added another creative element in re-recording, the controlled mixing of two or more sounds on to a single disc. The equivalent of film cutting was still a laborious and clumsy affair, dependent on the accuracy of an assistant in dropping the pick-up needle on to the correct groove of the disc at the right moment during transmission.

Nursing the Audience

With this cumbersome equipment four big programmes, made up entirely from recorded natural sound with a connective commentary, were done: "Hopping Holiday," "Bank Holiday," "Gale Warning" and "Cable Ship."

Questioned on why the natural sound in these programmes was only used to illustrate the action already described by the commentator, Gilliam replied that the use of sound to tell its own story would have to develop gradually. Comprehension by the audience was the first essential. As audiences grew more accustomed to interpreting the meaning of a sound image, and as producers solved the problem of replacing speech with clear-cut and dramatic images, the constructive use of sound would emerge.

Recently Gilliam invited the same group of directors to Broadcasting House to hear the New Year programme "Twelve Months Back" and to discuss progress in the actuality field.

He described how the coming of a new technical device called the Gramophone Mixer had brought the actuality producer the equivalent of cutting, and had also simplified re-recording.

The new mixer is a bank of six turntables with calibrated pick-ups and volume controls on a local control-panel. The calibrations on the pick-ups give change-over facilities to a precision of 1/10th of a second, while the local control-panel makes possible the simultaneous mixing of sounds from the discs running on any of the turntables.

Six programmes have been done on the Mixer: "St. Giles's Fair," "Harvest Home," "Dinner is Served," "Twelve Months Back," "Fog," and "Shrove Tuesday."

Encouragement Wanted

Meanwhile new mobile recording vans are on order. These, when completed, will be available to the Regions so that material for the programmes may be collected from all parts of the country.

"But actualities still tend to be a straightforward microphone reflection of an existing subject," Gilliam continued. "We do not yet have sufficient encouragement to enforce a really interpretative method. We badly need an articulate public—a body of helpful criticism (and so says *WFN*). As it is we are in the experimental stages and must go slowly."

SOVIET OPERA AT B.B.C.

Shostakowitch's "Lady Macbeth"

"Oedipus Rex" broadcast on February 12th, and "Lady Macbeth" broadcast on March 18th with Albert Coates conducting, are the most important events of this season's B.B.C. concert programmes.

Shostakowitch belongs to the school of young Soviet composers. His latest opera KATRINA ISMAILOWA is a love story which is treated very naturalistically. The opera had a tremendous success in Prague and other Western European countries.

"Oedipus Rex" demonstrated Stravinsky's remarkable sense of style in drawing inspiration from every age of music and in leaving the whole a perfect shape, satisfying every aesthetic and emotional demand. But since the established idea of "originality" dies hard, it is easy to see why Stravinsky's later works are regarded with disfavour. Another difficulty is his later method of dramatic composition. The set, stylised musical numbers, the Latin words, and the masks worn by most of the actors combine to give the impression of an impersonal comment on Sophocles' drama rather than a re-enactment of it.

A deep contrast to this method appears in "Lady Macbeth." Here the music is the terrible sadistic drama itself, and it is only in the remarkable entr'actes that Shostakowitch makes detached comments on the previous gruesome events on the stage.

Let us hope that the critics have given this work a better welcome than they handed to "Oedipus Rex." One London critic expressed amusement at Jocasta's lovely aria in Act II. But maybe it is a compliment to the music to have stirred up any emotion in him at all.

B.B.C. AND EDUCATIONISTS' POLICY CLASH AT E.A. CONFERENCE

At the January conference of Educational Associations, educationists discussed broadcasts to schools with the Central Council for School Broadcasting.

On information given at the conference, the B.B.C. lists three main types of broadcast in its programme of Broadcasts to Schools for this season. Two of these types conform to the existing classroom technique.

The third group prescribes "broadcasts which supplement school studies and experience on the imaginative side." This hints that the microphone can dramatise the events of everyday for the schools. But actuality for the schools has so far been confined to special events like the launching of the *Queen Mary*.

CLASS-ROOM LIMITS

It was suggested that the Council treats broadcasting too much as an illustrative aid to the curriculum and forgets that broadcasting can bring to the classroom vivid and necessary sound-pictures of contemporary life.

"Will the B.B.C. use its power to bring day by day to the schools what the ordinary curriculum cannot provide—or will its horizons continue to be bounded by the old classroom limits?" was the principal motion put to the Council.

It is significant that Dr. W. W. Vaughan, Chairman of the Central Council, ended a recent essay on school broadcasting with the words, "Can we not use it less clumsily?"

AND TELEVISION

MANIFESTO

By Alberto Cavalcanti, Cedric Belfrage, Thorold Dickenson, John Grierson and Graham Greene

We appreciate the fact that television must develop slowly. We appreciate the need for a preliminary period of test and experiment. We realise that from the television qualities and B.B.C. monies at first available we can only expect the simplest results. But we remember with concern that the tradition of radio is to REPRODUCE. We ask an assurance from the B.B.C. that the new medium—at least in part—will be used to CREATE.

Part I

THE USE OF FILM

TELEVISION MUST BE KEPT WITHIN THE LIMITS OF EFFECTIVE VISUAL PRESENTATION.

Magic lantern levels and direct demonstration from maps, etc., should not be despised if they give a higher quality of definition. Better good magic lantern than bad film. Better good information than crude æs.hetic.

CONSIDER FIRST THE FIELDS WHICH ARE NOT NOW EFFECTIVELY COVERED BY THE MOVIE THEATRES.

The announced programme—with its emphasis on news-reel and ciné-magazine—suggests an imitation of the trifles now satisfactorily supplied to the public in its weekly film programmes.

A repetition of film news-reels is superfluous and beneath the level of news announcement we expect from the B.B.C.

Far better to have the B.B.C.'s own news service, with simple illustrations. This need not be dramatised like *The March of Time*, but might be presented with a straightforward use of maps and stills. It might incorporate different points of view and different levels of appreciation.

Let the B.B.C. in these matters create standards for the film trade, and not vice-versa.

CONSIDER THE MORE PRIVATE ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH TELEVISION WILL DEVELOP.

Television represents showmanship to the same people who go to the theatres, but to the same people in a different mood. The atmosphere of the home and the smallness of the screen emphasise the privacy of television.

It should not be taken for granted, therefore, that film sequence can satisfactorily be transferred to the television screen.

The B.B.C. should consider the possibility of television sequence being a new craft which must be discovered and built up by the B.B.C. itself. A training in *existing* film technique may be less useful than is now supposed.

With these qualifications, film may be regarded as a principal factor in the television scheme.

FILM PROVIDES A STORE AND LIBRARY FOR IMAGES. IT GIVES RANGE TO TELEVISION.

FILM PERMITS EFFECTIVE AND RICH EDITORIAL WORK. IT ALLOWS TELEVISION A CREATIVE AS DISTINCT FROM A REPRODUCTIVE ROLE. TELEVISION AS AN ART MEDIUM DEPENDS ON THE USE OF FILM.

FILM ELIMINATES CLUMSY METHODS OF TIMING.

Present B.B.C. methods of production, while preserving—and over a large part of the field rightly preserving—direct contact with broadcasters, appear to the film mind naïve. The organisation of production through many microphones and many cubicles allows of only the simplest forms. Where mechanical means can ensure the consideration and reconsideration of sequence and *tempo*, and determine beforehand the technical perfection of a broadcast, it is foolish not to take advantage of mechanical means.

FILM PERMITS EXPERIMENT.

Most important criticisms of B.B.C. working are as follows: The administrative and executive staffs are too detached from each other: consequently, the creative staff lacks the incentive of real responsibility. The fear of mistakes tends, in both staffs, to create inhibition, diminish energy, cynicise ambition and weaken results.

The preparation of programmes on film will enable the creative staff to experiment, and the administrative staff to consider experiment, before broadcast.

FILM ESTABLISHES TECHNICAL STANDARDS.

A film basis for television will give to the B.B.C. what it bas long lacked: a body of established technical standards which personnel may consider and absorb and develop. It will give the B.B.C. an effective body of criticism. It has been difficult to build a body of criticism among the evanescent impressions of direct broadcast.

Part II

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE AUDIENCE will be published in next month's WFN.

Edward VIII and Broadcasting

It was a matter of common belief if not of knowledge that His late Majesty was a devoted listener to the B.B.C. programmes. Many believed that he exercised an indirect but powerful influence on B.B.C. style and programmes.

The maintenance of the dignities and respectabilities of an old but swiftly passing generation has been a principal feat of Sir John Reith's directorship.

The conjecture now is what the influence of the new King will be on Broadcasting House. His methods are less obviously ceremonial. He gives daily evidence of a practical common-sense outlook on national problems fitted to our time and mood.

One paper already reports the discarding of the celebrated but ornate microphones of Buckingham Palace. The King, with admirable directness, decides to make his Empire broadcast from the B.B.C. itself.

TELEVISION TODAY

ALL OVER THE WORLD

BRITAIN

Structural alterations at Alexandra Palace are nearly complete and the building is now ready with Baird and Marconi-E.M.I. transmitters installed. Tests, beginning in April, will continue for two months and regular programmes are expected to start in the early summer.

The first regular transmission service will occupy three one-hour periods each day: 3 to 4 p.m., 6.15 to 7.15 p.m. and 9.30 to 10.30 p.m., with no transmission on Sundays.

Gerald Cock, television director, in a special communication to *WFN*, indicates a concentration for the first months on demonstrating television itself, rather than any approach to creative handling. Programmes will include one hour's vaudeville a day and a maximum of topicality and news value.

NEW TELEVISION H.Q.
Alexandra Palace

Large-scale mass-production of cheap sets will almost certainly be delayed until radiation results are known and until the demand can be more accurately assessed.

Luxury Market

Prices of the first sets on the market will probably range from £50 to £100. The existing 10s. will cover private reception of television, and as soon as regular transmission begins some thirty viewing-rooms will be opened in London for public inspection of programmes and sets.

Birmingham and Manchester are expected to be the next transmission centres, and Post Office engineers are busy laying the Birmingham-London stretch of the £1,000-a-mile coaxial cable necessary for television land-line relays. The Birmingham-Weedon section is already completed.

An announcement by the Postmaster-General emphasizes that the television service will have to be developed gradually and that many difficulties will have to be overcome before a service can be provided on a national scale.

FRANCE

Since February 18th regular transmissions, both direct and film, have been in operation daily between 4.0 and 4.30 p.m. from the Eiffel Tower on the Barthélemy system.

GERMANY

Three separate activities: Regular transmission service and public viewing-rooms in Berlin. Development of telephone-television by the German Post Office on the Baird system.

Secret military research under the Goering Air Ministry.

RUSSIA

Since the first experimental transmissions from Moscow in 1931, television has been in the hands of the Russian Post Office.

Recent reports state that transmission quality has reached a high standard.

ITALY

Programme progress reported in direct transmissions from E.I.A.R., Rome. New stations contemplated in the near future.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Public interest aroused when television was demonstrated at the Prague radio exhibition in 1934.

Research has been concentrated in the Technical Institute of Bodenbach, on the German frontier.

HUNGARY

Mihaly's transmission system now subsidised by the government.

U.S.A.

R.C.A. reported as putting 1,000,000 dollars into television development, and building an experimental station to open in April or May.

De Forest, inventor of the triode valve, researching on mechanical scanners to obtain a larger picture than at present practicable with cathode ray tubes.

JAPAN

Television Institute founded in 1935 now working under government auspices.

WHO WILL MAKE B.B.C. FILMS

The need of using film for television programmes has prompted the B.B.C. to set up its own film unit and arrange for sources of film supply in Wardour Street. Gerald Cock, director of television, has advertised widely for 1 music director, 2 stage managers, 3 producers, 1 special programme producer, 1 assistant producer, 1 film assistant, 1 male announcer, 1 female announcer, 1 hostess, and 1 artists' booking assistant. These, presumably, will act as a basis of the B.B.C.'s staff for film production.

Appointments rumoured but not confirmed are Cecil Lewis, radio producer and one-time film director for B.I.P., and Dallas Bower, director of *The Path of Glory* and author of *Plan for Cinema*.

It is believed that Cock's interest concentrates on the use of newsreel material and on excerpts from films which may prove, in effect, trailers for the fortunate subjects selected. Comments by detached observers of the calibre of Alistair Cooke may, however, relieve the publicity element.

Other items announced by Cock are illustrated talks, drama talks with illustrations, posed scenes, industrial exhibitions, fashion shows and interviews with personalities.

WARDOUR STREET SUPPLIES

The B.B.C.'s association with Gaumont-British assures it of excellent sources of supply for news-reel material and interest programmes. Contact with the units of Andrew Buchanan and Bruce Woolfe assure it of first-rate quality in production. A varied programme may, however, suggest other and more varied sources of supply, with some emphasis on the editorial duties of the B.B.C.'s own film staff.

The luxury or novelty or technician ownership of the first television sets must necessarily limit the B.B.C.'s obligations on the creative side of their work.

WE HOPE THAT

News-reels will continue to co-operate, and avoid ungainly squabbles over exclusive items.

The great Flaherty will soon come riding home on his elephant.

The parsons who now run their own Sunday shows will come to terms with the parsons who ban all Sunday cinemas.

The Russians' notorious inefficiency in film distribution will be seen to in the third Five Year Plan.

The Film Institute under a new and powerful management will improve its public position.

The B.B.C. will get better fight-commentators—preferably with watches.

Among the Kordaic thunders we may one day hear the still, small voice of G.-B. announcing its production policy.

The present war-tension may produce another great film on war.

The news-reel executives who asked for "a *March of Time* by Tuesday" will presently find enlightenment.

The Ministry of Agriculture will continue the film policy of the E.M.B., and promote films of agricultural research.

CRITICISMS

ROMANTIC ANARCHIST—

JOHN GRIERSON WRITES:

Chaplin carries in his name so much of the history, tradition and past brilliance of cinema that it is difficult to criticise this latest work. Personal affection is the death of good judgment. Many press criticisms—Greene in the *Spectator* and Cooke on the B.B.C. were particularly good —have reflected the difficulty.

The theme—in so far as there is a theme—is that our rationalised world is crushing the individual —and that there is no place for a free and lively spirit in the world of machinery, big business and police. Chaplin is as much of a misfit with the workers as he is with the bosses. He fears the workers only a little less than their masters. Positively, there are many superb gags and enough of Chaplin's brilliant dance and mime to make any film distinguished. Negatively, it is disconnected and, in its overtones, sad, sentimental and defeatist.

Chaplin has taken life seriously enough to make an indictment against its present slaveries, and must be judged as seriously as the issue he raises. His sympathies are fiercely against exploitation, but he proves himself the loosest of thinkers. His position is that of the romantic anarchist. His hatred of capitalist machinery and organisation gets mixed up with the anarchist's hatred of all machinery and organisation together.

It is recognised that the only solution Chaplin could offer is a call to personal bravery. But he chooses a doubtful bravery. Taking to the high road is as near to suicide of the will as makes no matter.

Funny situations succeed each other and demonstrate great comic invention and execution. They become curiously more depressing as this romantic and trifling issue begins to emerge. The critics have said that Chaplin made the mistake of putting his best laughs in the first part. This is a wrong estimate. The truth is that you cannot laugh very heartily with a corpse in the house. This is not a reflection on the comedy but on the atmosphere. Chaplin himself chose it.

Chaplin's usual collection of stock characters and sentimentalities—the waif held for vagrancy, the dying father, the children begging for bread, the stealing of a loaf—look somewhat mannered. We may endorse his sympathies but not his clichés. His maintenance of pure mime with background music seems equally old-fashioned and uninspired.

Avoiding the possibilities of sound—and there are other possibilities than dialogue—he merely demonstrates that he has lost interest in the technique of his art. He has, under the new régime, discovered nothing and created nothing out of its vitalising powers. In this, Chaplin proves yet again how near the anarchist may be to the die-hard Tory.

So, in spite of Chaplin's unique claim to our respect, and the basic genius of his comic figure, this last work proves to be doubly depressing. In his social statement and in his technical statement he has no progressive sense of belief to offer either his public or himself. He is funny but not gay. When his brilliance should inspire, he only dispirits. Chaplin has failed to bring forward his creative power into these Modern Times. He is out-of-date. Paradoxically, *Charlie at the Rink* and *Charlie the Champion* are as fresh as ever.

OR MASS MAN?

CONTROVERSY OVER MODERN TIMES

IVOR MONTAGU REFUTES:

The chiefest waste of time is to gas about what is good and what is bad in Charlie's film: how it's got no plot and no story, the incidents and even gaps repeat themselves, the end doesn't solve anything, the pathos flat, the heroine hard, technique deliberately out of the Ark—in a thousand ways we can prove to ourselves it's the worst film Charlie has ever made. What's the use, when it still remains so much more enchanting than the films that anyone else makes? Charlie's films are *sui generis*; we can carp at them if we like, it still remains we'd rather see them than anybody else's we can think back and remember since we saw the last.

Why? It's not just manner, the timing of his gags, the rhythmic whatnot with which he, as no one else can, dives into an inch of water, it's matter inseparable from these. What is his matter? I remember an Amtorg official who once set himself this question. He craved an interview with Charlie. "I will determine Chaplin's orientation to the revolution once and for all," he announced firmly. We arranged it. The little man was on the set and in his make-up. Fixing his visitor in an armchair, he turned on him for some minutes the batteries of his charm. The visitor was hypnotised. After a more than ordinary abject reply from the guest, Charlie enquired mischievously: "But I am surprised to hear you say that. Aren't you then a Communist?" "Not exactly," replied the official. "What then?" "Well—you might call me a Soviet Conservative." It was not Charlie's relation to the revolution that had been established.

Charlie can be elusive, it is because he is undifferentiated. He is a member of the undifferentiated mass. When we accuse him of being an anarchist, we forget that the mass consists of individuals.

The mass-man may pass through various stages of conscious binding to society. He may be class-conscious. At a higher stage, he may be a party-man, a developed and conditioned unit of a new synthetic whole, the historically significant party. In one way or another he may exhibit social qualities of this kind. But to complain of a mass-man, who does not exhibit social qualities, that he is not a mass-man is absurd. It is an error than can be made only by those outside the masses who know them only as strange beings outside the frame of their windows, and who, when they meet them in the streets, are impatient with them because they do not each conform to the figure in their Marxist book which, after all, being an average, never was a real person.

It is significant, in contrast with the successful rescue of the orphan in *The Kid*, that here the task is so hopeless that no deliberate rescue is even mooted; the tramp is lucky enough that chance has saved one, Paulette, without either daring to bother about the sisters. The proletariat will sense this. They will be grateful to the Charlie who, alone in the Western cinema world, has dared to put on the screen speed-up, unemployment, starvation, riots, without bunk about recovery and order. It is significant that the Fascists have banned Charlie. The Mussolini who awarded Flaherty a gold medal, the Goebbels who declared the Aran fairy-man, living in a vacuum in respect to his fellows and pretending the sea was his only enemy, "to incarnate that patience and those virtues which the leader wishes the German people to possess," these know on which side of the barricade stands Charlie in *Modern Times*. *Modern Times* is in no sense a protest against "the machine age." Charlie is not Gandhi. He does not want the spinning-wheel. He is on the friendliest terms with the most complicated machinery. Is it not significant that when the machine plays with him and his companion it never even hurts them? His protest is *against the machine in the hands of the boss:* against mass production—when *speeded up*, against television—*used for bullying*, against the new feeder—fastened to the worker *by command*. In life as in his films, Charlie's horror is of being constricted. He hates war, he hates capitalism, not because of any political theory, not even because he loves the workers or humanity in general, but *because he himself has felt the pressure of poverty and the pressure of conscription*. Never has he forgotten the class from which he came.

BEST CRITICISM OF THE MONTH

GRAHAM GREENE in the "SPECTATOR"

Sesquippledan Verboojuice. Eloquent Rapsodooce

"I've been timid, O'Man. I've been holding myself in. I haven't done myself justice. I've kept down the simmering, seething, teeming ideas. . . ." The voice of Mr. Polly's friend Parsons came irresistibly to my mind as the vast expensive Korda-Wells film of the future ground noisily on its way, as I watched the giant aeroplanes, the stream-lined tanks, the bright complex meaningless machinery of Mr. Wells's riotous fancy. . . .Parsons too was an idealist.

Nevertheless a third of this film is magnificent. No one but the author of *War in the Air* could have created so vividly, with such horribly convincing detail, the surprise air raid with which the great war of 1940 opens; the lorry with loud speakers in Piccadilly Circus urging the crowd to go quietly home and close all windows and block all apertures against gas, the emergency distribution of a few inadequate masks, the cohort of black planes driving over the white southern cliffs, the crowd milling in subways, the dreadful death cries from the London 'bus, the faceless man in evening dress dead in the taxi. But from this point the film steadily deteriorates, though the world's reversion to barbarism, the plague, the small parochial dictator who carries on twenty years later the same war with the same slogans against his parish neighbour, like a mediaeval Della Scala, has the acuteness and authenticity of a lesson properly drawn from history. It is with the intrusion of Mr. Wells's "Great Conspiracy," an organisation of air-men working together from a base in Basra to clean up the world, that the film begins to lose all its interest in the clouds of Mr. Wells's uncontrolled fancies, vague, optimistic, child-like. "I am Wings over the World," the strange airman persistently and irritatingly replies to the robber leader's question, "Who are you?" As Mr. Polly remarked when he saw Parsons' window-dressing, "The High Egrugious is fairly On.". . .

Out of the simmering, seething, teeming ideas of Mr. Wells there emerges, after the reformed dresses, the underground city, the new machinery, the classless society, the television, the tiny wireless sets worn on the wrist, the endless little mechanical toys, the realisation that something after all is still missing . . .

But it comes as a shock to his audience that Mr. Wells can think of no less old-fashioned a way of appeasing this sense of dissatisfaction than by shooting two of his characters at the moon. ("The best of life"—nobody in this film speaks less bookishly than that—"lies nearest to the edge of death,") and the film closes with a sky of stars and some hollow optimistic phrase about the infinite spaces and the endlessness of man's future progress. It is in such smug and sentimental terms that the characters in this film always speak. Only Mr. Polly, I think, could find the right words to describe their embarrassing eloquence. "Sesquippledan," one can almost hear him saying, "sesquippledan verboojuice. Eloquent Rapsodooce."

When the noise and the shouting has subsided it may be possible to suggest that M. Sacha Guitry's *Bonne Chance* is worth a dozen *Things to Come*, whether you consider it as cinema, as entertainment or even as social criticism. It is a charming silly film in the Clair *genre*, a lyrical absurdity. It reminds one again that only the cinema and music among the arts have been able to convey this sense of poignant happiness, the quickness and lightness and transience of a sensation you cannot call by any name so heavy as joy: "the phoenix hour": the nearest to a Utopia poor mankind is ever likely to get.

We are disappointed that—

The English studios still make no move to develop short comedies.

* * *

The Film Section of the F.B.I. has not yet been able to define a Quality Clause for the proposed new Quota Act.

* * *

No word has recently been heard of Korda's *Conquest of the Air.*

* * *

Britain, once the biggest Travelogue maker in the world, is prevented by Act of Parliament from carrying on this fine tradition.

* * *

The Colour-film should have chosen *Becky Sharp* to carry its banner.

* * *

Ned Mann's brilliant trick-work should have been kept in an American circle.

* * *

The 16 mm. sound projector has not yet been standardised.

* * *

No British manufacturer makes a nice, cheap zoom-lens.

* * *

B.I.P. has not yet announced its educational film policy.

* * *

There is no apprenticeship scheme in the film industry.

Under the sea with Painlevé

Jean Painlevé, son of the late French premier, makes films of aquatic life. Well aware that his films will be seen by few and convinced that they cannot pay, this young man devotes his life and fortune to the development of the scientific documentary film. He has subsidised the "Institut de Cinématographie Scientifique" and triennial congresses are held to discuss relevant film problems.

Painlevé gets no government help for his scientific experiments. His story reads like that of an idealist, but his approach to films is strictly that of a scientist. As he refuses to romanticise his subjects or give way in any respect to "box office," he is able to finance few films.

Painlevé is not troubled by the complicated problems of scientific filming. "You need," says he, "five thousand to two thousand pictures a second for filming movement of wings, currents of water, air or dust; for filming under water you need artificial light at the rate of 8,000 watts per cubic metre of water."

Sea bottom or Aquarium

Under-water work for him has been facilitated by the recent invention of an apparatus that dispenses with the use of heavy diving dress. It is similar to a gas mask and is sufficiently practical to have been adopted by the French navy. The apparatus is called "Scaphandre Le Prieur," and has led to the formation by Painlevé of a club which trains its members to use the device for submarine filming, rescue work and even aquatic sports.

But according to Painlevé the most accurate under-water photographs can only be taken in an aquarium. The real sea offers too many difficulties. Tides, currents, wandering sands all present a problem, but even with brilliant sunlight, satisfactory pictures cannot be taken much more than three feet below the surface.

Painlevé experiments with colour, but is loath as yet to give an opinion on its value in scientific work.

Painlevé's Under-sea Apparatus

MEETINGS and ACQUAINTANCES

By ALL HANDS

ERICH POMMER, great figure of Germany's golden age, producer behind Lang, Murnau, May, Charrell and von Sternberg's *Blue Angel*, has arrived to take up a production unit for Korda.

Has arranged to make six films including *Gloriana*, with mention of another starring Dietrich. *Gloriana* script is by the celebrated European dramatist Bruckner, author of *Elizabeth of England*, *Criminals*, and the British banned *Race*. Flora Robson stars as Queen Elizabeth.

Pommer speaks authoritatively and quietly like any lawyer or doctor. His profession is the organisation of dramatic result and he makes it a profession. Rarely, for a film man, he talks of plans and planning.

Pommer mentions Hollywood with reverence for the experience it can give a serious technician. He says Hollywood taught him more about his job than all his other experience put together. Coming from a man whose greatest honours were in Europe, this is high comment.

LAUGHTON is remarkable in both domestic surrounding and private conversation. Domestic surroundings include a Renoir which takes the breath away, a whacking Utrillo, a Douanier Rousseau and fine interior decoration by Wells Coates and John Armstrong.

Laughton says he wishes he could do his own job as satisfactorily as Renoir. Who doesn't? He talked about Leo McCarey, the director of *Ruggles*, with generous regard. He admires Garbo and draws attention to the intelligence of Thalberg.

He mentions the sounding words of the *Bounty* and how they were written into the film to balance the stature of the sails. They were only decided on after Laughton and others had seen the sensational ship exteriors. In this example the actuality element forced the pace of the scenario department.

KORDA is likely to find Pommer invaluable at this stage of London Films development. There is plenty of vision down there but possibly not enough thought for the day-after-to-morrow. Korda's development from director to producer and from producer to financier has been swift from an organisational point of view. American studios have expensively discovered that responsibility must be shared.

SIR STEPHEN TALLENTS, creator of the famous Empire Marketing Board, later Chief of Public Relations for the Post Office, now Controller of P.R. at the B.B.C., writes for the *Nineteenth Century* in high praise of Rotha's book *Documentary Film*.

Sir Stephen has probably a better understanding of the film world than any other chief at Broadcasting House. He has studied it closely since he started his own film unit at the E.M.B. eight years ago. He has particularly followed every development in the actuality field.

His knowledge and judgment are bound to be a great asset to the B.B.C. The use of film by television and the development of the actuality programmes on the lines of established film technique demand guidance such as his.

Sir Stephen says of the actuality movement that "It has an obvious bearing on the future, not only of the screen, but also of broadcasting and emphatically of television." This is useful coming from a high B.B.C. official. What is even more useful is the fact that he had the unique reputation in Whitehall of knowing how to give his creative assistants freedom.

W. H. AUDEN, one of the three brightest poets of the younger generation, author of *Dance of Death* and *The Dog Beneath the Skin*, and incidentally film assistant at the G.P.O. Film Unit, wades into his documentary masters in a *Listener* review.

Auden says documentary directors are upper middle-class and never likely to understand workers. He says sponsorship by industrial companies, government department, etc., will never permit truthful account of their people.

Their description as "upper middle" will surprise and flatter not a few documentary directors. What is more important than paternities is that documentary forces all its serfs to live and learn with workmen under working conditions. Few operators in other arts come as close.

Auden also complains that the documentary product lacks human appeal. It is to be noted that human element increases as the apprentices learn their job. As Auden's own apprenticeship matures he may feel less despondent.

DOLLS IN MOTION

STAREVITCH REVEALS SECRETS

In a small studio in his home near Paris, Starevitch plans his next fairy-tale film. It will feature his favourite, Dunky, the bull-pup, in a sort of *Max and Moritz* comedy. There will be a family of small Dunkys getting in and out of trouble.

Starevitch models the faces of his dolls from soft camel leather. He changes their expressions for each "shot" of the film, removing a wrinkle, turning down the corners of a mouth, or shifting an eye until it squints. He used to use masks—having about 20 for each doll. But they did not allow sufficiently smooth changes of expression. The bodies, arms and legs of his toys are flexible, yielding to the slightest touch. Rarely does he have to pull strings to set them into a required movement.

Years ago Starevitch directed actors, in Russia. But he prefers his dolls. "Actors," he says, "always want to have their own way."

Some time later he was working on an educational film. It marked the beginning of his interest in models.

"I had to show the life of the stag beetles," he said. "I waited days and days to shoot a battle between two beetles, but they would not fight with the lights shining on them. So I tried trick animals. I liked moulding them so much that I continued until I found myself making fairy-tales." In his living-room are specimens of fish, butterflies and beetles. They stand upright and hold violins or clarinets. He spends much time studying the action and habits of insect and animal life. It takes him about three months to make a film.

He does not understand how marionettes could be used for political propaganda films, he said, when he heard about *Gulliver*, the new Russian Marionette film. His films have no ambitious intentions or hidden purpose. He wants only to humanise his dolls, to make them miserable, happy, playful, to express through them the emotions of real life.

One day soon he hopes to make a colour film. He dresses his dolls, even when shooting for black and white pictures, in coloured garments. "How else," asks he, "could I get the atmosphere, if I did not like the colour of their clothes?"

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MEETINGS and ACQUAINTANCES

(continued)

A DIRECTOR whom we may not name complains that our British near-stars are taking themselves too seriously. He says that Garbo herself would not dream of making so much bother over choice of stories, directors, etc. He thinks that social pretensions are particularly destructive.

He maintains that Laughton and Gracie Fields are the only genuine number ones in England to-day and that they significantly are the easiest of the lot.

LEO MITTLER, celebrated stage director in Germany before the Hegira, reports directorial service with A.T.P. He will be remembered by Film Society audiences for his fast sensationally-cut film *In the Street*.

Mittler says that power to spend money has become the principal virtue in film direction. A biography in big films and a reputation for Napoleonic spending overshadow other qualities in the minds of our producers.

The producers are so myopic on this point that they do not dream of asking what happened afterwards at the box-office. Win or lose, get a reputation for spending, he says, and you will live for ever.

HENRI STORCK, Belgium's ace director and *avant-garde* leader, arrives with a beautifully-made interest film of Pitcairn Island. The descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers are there in the life. Remainders of dress and habit and physiognomy provide a remarkable study of the Englishman gone native.

Storck reports a tie-up with A.B.F.D., but has been astonished at the lack of interest shown by some showmen in this *Bounty* follow-up. Some of them maintain that the *Bounty* interest will have disappeared shortly. Their unusual theory is that a film does not stimulate, but obliterates interest. Educationists and Laughton might note.

The unexpected but gracious figure of CARL DREYER appears on Wardour Street. Dreyer began his film career in Denmark with a little film of domestic interiors called *The Master of the House*. It circulated widely in England. It had virtues of simplicity and humanity which one seldom sees nowadays.

Dreyer proceeded to make *The Passion of Jeanne d'Arc* in France. It was the last of the great silent films and had enormous directorial influence. Echoes—dim—of it will be seen presently in *Riders to the Sea*.

Jeanne d'Arc was presented by the Film Society. Booked for the Plaza it was shown only at matinées. It was said at the time that it lost a fortune.

The Vampire followed—script, direction and finance all by Dreyer. The Council of the Film Society saw it but did not present it.

Recent activities are the script of a British version of *Caligari* and preparations for a film of the Lofoten Islands. Dreyer, gentlest and most sensitive of men, most painstaking and fiercest of directors, awaits the guiding hand of a first-rate producer. "A great director, a bad producer," is one description of his career.

KARL KOCH, one of cinema's really original thinkers, has come to England to assist his wife LOTTE REINIGER, in the exhibition of Silhouette film technique at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Koch, stout and amiable, has fresh ideas on uses for trick work and animation. He wants to show world movements, history and geography, by model work rather than diagram. He believes pure cinema is movement, suspense, excitement, and therefore has no use for literary film forms, Full of admiration for Ned Mann's technique in *Things to Come*, Koch nevertheless feels infuriated that good trickwork should be used for fake illusion. He thinks world of the future will be the exact opposite of Wells-Korda version.

At the Chaplin Film with Chaplin

by Heinz Liepmann

Heinz Liepmann is one of the most promising of the younger German novelists outside Germany.

His book, "Wanderers in The Mist," got for him the Harper Prize in 1930. He also wrote "Peace Broke Out" and "Murder Made in Germany."

Four days before the New York première of *Modern Times*, a waiter in a dirty, back street hotel went upstairs to present a bill for the third and last time. But he was too late. He found a little old man lying dead with a frightful roaring laugh still fixed on his face. That little old man was Alfred Rothapfel, known the world over as "Roxy," builder and creator of the modern super-cinemas—builder of the Rivoli where *Modern Times* had its première.

And it was of "Roxy" that Chaplin spoke when I talked to him that night.

I had been asked, as an exported "intellectual," to say a few words on the opening night, and was told that I would meet "him." So, of course, I went.

A rostrum was put up in front of the screen and at intervals the music stopped and "celebrities" were pushed out from the back. My turn came. I made a little speech, there were a few hand-claps, and I was in the darkness back-stage again. I wandered off, feeling my fright now it was over, and longing for a cigarette, forbidden in American cinemas. Suddenly, right at the side where the fireman stands, I saw three glowing tips. I went over. There were three men and a woman. She was leaning over the back of the chair of the youngest man. I said "Hullo" and sat down. As I lit my cigarette I saw I was sitting next to Chaplin.

CHARLIE AND THE INTELLECTUALS

He started talking to me about German authors. Then we sat silent. On the stage, the State Governor was speaking. Suddenly Chaplin asked me if I knew who had built this theatre. Then he told me the story of "Roxy." In the ghostly back-stage setting, he told it well. Chaplin has the voice of a sensitive, restless man. I am no Chaplin hero-worshipper, but I felt I was with an extraordinary person. There is a gripping atmosphere about him. And yet he looks as though he likes to be sad and quiet.

The film began. I craned my neck to see. But Chaplin wanted to talk.

"Why am I so popular with European intellectuals?"

I asked him in reply did he know the Jewish word for actor? It means disguise. Most screen actors are "disguised." But that is exactly what . . .

"What do I do?"

"You haven't disguised yourself. You are as we all really are: not heroes but little sad figures. We are all continually getting kicked, and always believe it to be the last, until the next kick comes along."

"I get many letters from Europe," Chaplin said. The man on my left elaborated. "Letters, not written to an actor, but as one little man pouring out his heart to another."

Towards the end Chaplin asked me about Europe. He said he did not read newspapers and had had no time lately for books. So I told him something of Europe's plight. He listened attentively without comment. As I rose to go he took my hand and held it. "Tell your comrades," he said, "that they will hear from me."

Chaplin Poster Criticised

A simple and memorable design. Instantaneously recognisable likeness, drawn with great sensibility. Could have been one of the most distinguished recent advertisements, had McKnight Kauffer's drawing been left unimpaired by advertiser's self-willed and discordant typography. Zéro.

ALL OVER AGAIN

To the L.C.C. Education Committee

Sirs,—You must have had plenty of congratulations on your decision to experiment with films in your educational schemes. Ours we add with some reserve, because you seem to be a bit behindhand in your plans.

You propose first of all to find out to what extent film may be used with the school curriculum. Fine—but the Glasgow Education Committee have done this already. We now know that the function of cinema in the classroom is *ILLUSTRATION*. Glasgow, with Manchester and Edinburgh, is now working on this basis.

Why not start from where they are, instead of ploughing five years back?

Secondly, you are experimenting with mass-demonstration, and have already given special shows of general educationals to crowds of children in large cinemas. Fine again—but the Scottish Educational Film Association and the G.P.O. Film Unit have been doing it for some years. They will tell you at once that mass-demonstrations in school or cinema are good for *DIRECTED BACKGROUND TEACHING*. This, in fact, is where the vital contribution of film to education is to be found.

An imaginative (i.e., efficient) teacher illustrates most lessons in the classroom with a blackboard, some wall-pictures, a diascope and his own intelligence. But he cannot so easily illustrate important things outside the curriculum, which concern life rather than academics. Whether he is in touch with contemporary trends or not, he cannot be sure of re-creating the living facts for his pupils. The cinema, in the mass-demonstration sense, most certainly can.

The films you are using just now deal with industry, housing, and communications. Your experiments are bound to lead you to the conclusions stated above. As they are already established, you might well continue their development right away, and confirm the school cinema as a really important factor in the teaching of citizenship.

Educational Editor,
WFN

THAT EXTRA YEAR

During February Mr. Oliver Stanley introduced the Government's new Education Bill, the most important section of which proposes the raising of the school leaving age to 15.

Will the extra time be devoted to a greater proficiency in the three R's, or will it be used in a first application of the three R's to reality?

The main effects of the Bill should be sought in the post-primary schools which do not aim to pass their children out to the professons.

In these schools the progressive teacher can relate the factual knowledge gained in the Primary school to the world which the child is about to enter. Such a policy vitally affects citizenship, and suggests a policy for both films and broadcasting.

The actuality film and the actuality broadcast can help the teacher in this extra educational year. Their dramatisations of the contemporary world can bring new interest to the post-primary period. Their analysis of the social organisation can impart a sense of citizenship and an attitude to life. Both can bring the living world to the classroom and so assist in providing the extension of experience which must be the main justification for the additional year.

WFN enjoys the support and goodwill of the following:

Sidney Bernstein. James Bridie. Sir William Crawford. A. J. Cummings. J. H. Duveen. S. M. Eisenstein. T. S. Eliot. André Gide. Jean Giono. Mary Hamilton. Wilson Harris (editor of *The Spectator*). Julian Huxley. Alec King. Fritz Lang. Charles Laughton. Low. Carl Mayer. E. McKnight Kauffer. Darius Milhaud. Henry Moore. Moholy Nagy. G. W. Pabst. Erich Pommer. S. G. Rayment (editor of *The Kine Weekly*). Flora Robson. Victor Saville. Josef Von Sternberg. Szigeti. Herbert Thompson (editor of the *Film Weekly*). H. G. Wells. Charles Wright.

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Anthony Asquith. W. H. Auden. Thomas Baird. Cedric Belfrage. Henry Blyth. Andrew Buchanan. Ritchie Calder. Molly Castle. Elsie Cohen. Alistair Cooke. Thorold Dickenson. Mary Field. Aubrey Flanagan. Graham Greene. Spike Hughes. Christopher Isherwood. Philip Jordan. Campbell Nairne. J. Fairfax-Jones. C. A. Lejeune. Angus MacPhail. E. McKnight Kauffer. Walter Leigh. Ivor Montagu. D. M. Robson. Paul Rotha. Marie Seton. Evelyn Spice. H. D. Waley.

WFN POLICY

World Film News is the *Cinema Quarterly* in new dress. *Cinema Quarterly* was founded by two young Edinburgh men, Norman Wilson and Forsyth Hardy. Over the past three years they have devotedly built a service of intelligent film criticism.

Cinema Quarterly was successful. It circulated widely through the film societies. A surprisingly large sale grew up in America. James Bridie described it as "nicely intolerant."

Some months ago, associates of the paper decided to improve its news service. Most of us were directly involved in professional film production and in the development of new uses for the film in educational and other fields. In a hundred places creative work of one sort or another was being done. We needed a digest of news which would keep us informed of cinema's growing points.

Cinema Quarterly had, of necessity, to rely on theory. *WFN* has more information, and less theory.

In the film world there is an excellent service of commercial and trade news and an excellent service for fans. There is no news service which reports on creative people and creative efforts in the many branches of cinema. WFN is, in this sense, a necessary paper.

Most communications in the film world are ruled by notions of publicity and showmanship. Wardour Street's attraction for many of us is that the exaggerations of showmanship rule its every expression. But a cooler and a more objective account of film happenings is also necessary.

Broadcasting and television have many commentators, but no body of criticism. The hopes and schemes of many intelligent men inside Broadcasting House are not encouraged by helpful outside criticism. *WFN* regards broadcasting and film as inseparable. They involve the same creative problems, both of sound and image.

We start with the blessing of many distinguished men. Some are interested because we shall report on the art of the film, others because we shall report on the public influence of the new media. The names of Alec King and Sidney Bernstein demonstrate that commercial showmen are also interested in progress. The co-operation and goodwill of the editors of other film papers are a tribute to the difference of our approach.

Publicity motives can neither ban nor buy an opinion in this paper. Its promoters are working film people—producers, directors, writers. All that interests them is a monthly survey of progress. To this exclusively WFN will remain devoted.

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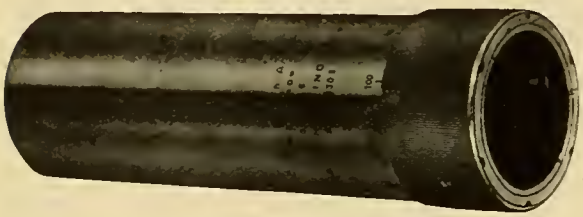

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The BUSCH POLYKINO Projection Lens is designed on the famous Neokino Formula, but varies in focus to suit cinemas which desire to alter screen width from time to time, or for portable outfits.

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MECHANICS

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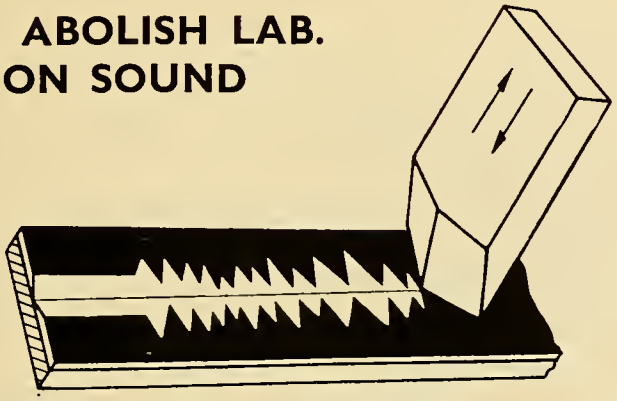

The Philips laboratories at Eindhoven, Holland, announce the perfection of a new sound-recording system designed in collaboration with James A. Miller, American engineer.

In this system the sound modulations, instead of being photographed in the normal method of film recording, are engraved on an opaque film-strip by a chisel.

The system claims several advantages over photographic recording:—

1. Abolition of developing and printing, with consequent reduction of cost.
2. Facility of immediate play-back, giving the producer a valuable check on the quality of his recording.
3. Extreme high-frequency performance through lightness of construction of the magnetic system controlling the movements of the chisel.

The reproduction quality is reported excellent.

CAMERA CRANE AT EALING

The average cinema-goer is not, and ought not to be, camera-conscious. But those who can master their emotions sufficiently to spare a thought for technicalities must on occasion wonder how the camera's viewpoint can hover so conveniently over the heads of the performers. Were the cameraman and his crew flitting round the studio roof in a perfected autogiro? They were not. They were perched aloft on the jib of a crane. Hitherto such cranes have generally been rigged up for the occasion and afterwards dismantled. The construction of a permanent crane, however, enables so many valuable refinements to be incorporated that we may expect to see their general introduction.

3¾ TONS

The A.T.P. Studio's crane shown in the illustration was designed by Mr. R. G. Double. The crane with camera and crew "up" weighs about 3¾ tons, yet it can be pushed along the ground by four men. Compressed air is the motive force for raising and lowering the jib which can be moved at any speed up to 168 feet per second.

Its position is controlled by a Vernier oil-valve with great precision, and the counterpoise weights never have to be shifted. This means that the crane can deposit its inhabitants at meal-times and restore them to the exact original position simply on the setting of the oil-valve control. The cameraman has a perch provided with a revolving platform worked by his own feet through cycle-pedals.

Noiseless working is of course essential in a camera-crane, and to this end all nuts and bolts were eliminated from the design, welding being employed throughout. The jib swings on gigantic 3-foot ball-races and rotates on roller bearings. The actual cost of the crane was £595.

LIGHT ON THE SET

Pola Screen gives new control

Though the unaided eye gives us no hint of the fact, light can be divided into two classes, polarised and unpolarised, and in all ordinary circumstances we are seeing by a mixture of both sorts. To illustrate the difference by a very crude analogy, unpolarised light consists of waves radiating about in all directions, like the hair on some human heads, while polarised light has waves uniformly combed out into a single plane, like the hair on other human heads.

A polarising screen is, in short, a light-comb. Hitherto prisms of Iceland spar have been the polarising devices most in use and these are quite unsuitable for photographic purposes. Kodak's Pola Screen has solved the problem of making polarising material in sheet form at a commercial price. It consists of a layer of countless minute rod-like crystals, which are all parallel to each other, sealed between glass plates.

Hair well combed

We know that hair well combed in one direction will not readily pass through the teeth of a comb pushed in some different direction. Similarly, light which has been polarised will not readily pass through a polarising screen which is so adjusted as to attempt to "comb" it in a new direction. In fact the greater the change of direction the less the light that passes. It will easily be seen that this gives the photographer a useful tool for the control of light-effects.

By rotating a Pola screen in front of his lens he can cut off more and more of his light, granted that his light is already polarised. He can, in fact, either polarise it by putting another Pola screen in front of his artificial light-source or he can make use of the fact that certain classes of natural light are already polarised. For example, most of the reflected lights which make surfaces appear "shiny" are polarised. The glare from such surfaces generally obscures their texture, and improved rendering may be obtained by cutting it off (see illustration).

Controlling the shine

Numerous cases where the control of shininess would be welcome to the photographer exist. Moreover a means of controlling light-intensity on given surfaces which does not depend on colour filtering may well prove to have useful applications in colour-photography. Very striking and beautiful colour-effects have been obtained by taking advantage of the fact that direct sunlight received at an angle of 90° is polarised. Pink fruit-blossom, for example, is seen standing out against a black sky in a 16 mm. Kodachrome film recently shown by the Kodak Co.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

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DOCUMENTARY

BRUCE WOOLFE'S JUBILEE

Twenty-five years in cinema

Once upon a time a young man worked in an office, found there were no prospects, and went into the film business. This was Bruce Woolfe.

Managing Director of Gaumont British Instructional, committee member of this and that, with fingers in all sorts of film pies, Bruce Woolfe confesses to the paternity of British documentary film, and is now an outstanding Wardour Street personality.

Around 1911, in his exhibiting days, a religious film brought him success. It happened like this. *Joseph and His Brethren*, starring Beerbohm Tree, was playing at His Majesty's Theatre. Bruce Woolfe, with brilliant opportunism, got hold of a French film called *Joseph*. Outside his cinema, a converted shop in Commercial Road, there suddenly appeared some Beerbohm Tree posters. Nobody seemed to know how they got there . . . Bruce Woolfe smiles at the recollection of this mystery . . . but there they were, and the cinema takings were colossal.

The war cut short his career as distributor, but four years later he was back making patriotic films and a lot of money. In 1919 he made history by laying the foundation stone of Elstree's film colony with British Instructional Films.

Later the company moved from Elstree to a converted mansion in Surbiton. Its success prompted a still further move to a large new studio at Welwyn Garden City. There Bruce Woolfe carried on the tradition of the British *Secrets of Nature* films until 1931, when the

control went over to John Maxwell, of British International Pictures.

Bruce Woolfe, with camera-man Percy Smith and director Mary Field, then formed British Independent Pictures. It lasted one month. Gaumont British had invited them over.

Bruce Woolfe has opinions: The younger school of documentary people must come down to earth. Film is film, not a poem, an oratorio, a symphony. If documentary is to be successful it mustn't be above the heads of the public. Interest films must be interesting not mystifying. We can't teach the entertainment makers anything . . . look at pictures like *First a Girl* . . . but we can get our market.

G.B.I. films catch on. France, Belgium, Switzerland and Sweden take all we can give them. Even Lancashire and Yorkshire, the most critical of British counties, appreciate what we send them. To be successful we must give the public what they want . . . it's they who pay the money.

With the British Film Institute and the Federation of British Industries, Bruce Woolfe is fighting to get quota for documentaries. It is not a personal matter—he can distribute on the G.B. circuit. But Bruce Woolfe, with the creation of the great *Secrets of Nature* series behind him, has the best interests of our actuality films at heart.

ANTI-SLUM FILM

A British film company has taken a courageous and constructive step to help the clearance of the country's slums.

Pathé Pictures has made a film, *The Great Crusade*, and has secured official aid in doing so. The film, which seeks to show housing conditions all over the country, has been made to help the national slum clearance campaign.

The film owes its inception to a number of disinterested persons and has not been inspired by any political party. The initiative came wholly from these persons and Pathé.

KINGSLEY WOOD ASKS LOCAL CO-OPERATION

In order to secure accuracy, however, they have been in consultation with the housing officers of local authorities throughout the country and have received invaluable help from Sir Kingsley Wood and the housing staff of the Ministry of Health. Sir Kingsley Wood, in a letter, has expressed himself to be so impressed with the film as portraying in its stark reality the evil effects of housing conditions that he hopes every Member of Parliament will take an opportunity of seeing it and of using his influence locally when this film is shown in the provinces, as it will be in the immediate future.

MONSEIGNEUR IN EDINBURGH

Scotland's first news theatre, the Monseigneur, occupies the site of the former Princes Cinema in Princes Street, Edinburgh, where Continental films were customarily shown. Its coming was welcomed by those to whom the popular cinema made little appeal.

During the past five months it has shown an eighty-minute programme ordinarily composed of an extended British Movietonews reel, Pathétone Weekly, one-reel travel film, musical short and cartoon. This policy met with comparative success, while the venture still had the glamour of novelty; but recently there have been signs of dissatisfaction, the programmes being criticised for their scrappiness, for their failure to present a real alternative to those of the popular theatres.

DOCUMENTARIES FEATURED

The management is aware of some at least of these shortcomings, and has been experimenting in recent weeks with a programme in which a two-reeler documentary is the feature. Many well-known documentaries, including, for example, *O'er Hill and Dale*, *Country Comes to Town*, *Contact*, *Shipyard*, *Face of Britain*. *New Generation* and *Weather Forecast* have been shown publicly in Edinburgh, and it is probable that those and others will receive exhibition at the Monseigneur, thus removing eventually the charge that the Scottish capital is one of the blackest spots in the country for documentary.

There is no doubt that the enlightened execution of such a policy would be followed by more generous and more loyal support than has been accorded the venture up till now. Andrew Buchanan's *Gaumont-British Magazine* is now included regularly in the programmes and the monthly issue of *The March of Time* is shown. The Edinburgh Film Guild, which for years urged the opening of a news theatre in the city, has made its headquarters (apart from exhibitions) at the theatre and the agreement made to work as far as possible in association, ought to be to the benefit of both.

DEATH ON THE ROAD FILM

MOTORING PRESS PROTESTS

Some papers demand more horror. "Too mild," says *Daily Express*, "we must copy the more harrowing style of the United States." "It is not so horrible as it sounds," complains *Motor Transport*. "Why should we not see imaginary . . . horrors on the screen?" asks the *C.T.C. Gazette*.

More significant is the angle taken by Motoring Press. The leader writer in *Commercial Motor* admits not to have seen the film, but dubs it "Railway Propaganda." "It is difficult," he writes, "to see how much farther this veiled propaganda for the railways can be carried now that it has gained an entrée into broadcasting and official documentary films." (This because victim of accident in film is a railwayman.)

MINISTRY ACCUSED OF BLUFF

The Motor comes straight out with: "The film lends strength to the theory that the Minister of Transport's campaign against road accidents is a deplorable piece of bluff skilfully aimed at discouraging motoring in favour of railway travel."

Politics lie behind the attitude of the *Daily Mirror*: "It is a strange film for a Government Department to sponsor, for it will cause resentment through class distinction." To express the depth to which its social pride is pricked, *The Motor* blares a headline: "Propaganda Film Which Will Stir Up Class Feeling" and adds ". . . it is a foul piece of anti-motoring cant, calculated to instil class enmity."

FILM SOCIETIES

PROGRESS ON ALL FRONTS

Note: News of the film societies, and copies of programmes for notice should be addressed to Cinema Contact's Edinburgh Office, 24 N.W. Thistle Street Lane, Edinburgh 2.)

THE CRITICAL section of the film public must be organised if it is to have any influence on the future development of cinema. Independently and intensively the many film societies throughout the country are working towards this aim. Among the orthodox, the British Film Institute is attempting a similar object.

Valuable as are the private exhibitions of advanced, experimental and foreign films organised by the film societies, any tendency towards the merely highbrow is a danger. The ultimate value of the film societies movement, which has shown a remarkable growth in recent years, is its power to persuade the uninformed of the artistic and social implications of cinema as a medium of expression. Unceasing propaganda towards this end should be the policy of every organisation. Programmes of the past season indicate that the majority of the English and Scottish societies are becoming increasingly conscious of their responsibility in this connection.

THE FILM SOCIETY of London, now in its tenth season, continues to act as a necessary shop window for outstanding Continental films and experimental productions from every quarter. The new secretary is Miss Mary Brown, 56 Manchester Street, London, W.1.

GLASGOW FILM SOCIETY, second oldest and perhaps largest British society, is now in its seventh season. Owing to the increase in membership, afternoon as well as evening performances are now given on Sundays. Lectures and demonstrations are arranged and a lively monthly bulletin is issued. The Hon. Sec. is D. Paterson Walker, 127 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

A new film society has been started in PLYMOUTH. The secretary is Martin Atkinson, Virginia House, Palace Street, Plymouth.

Authoritative lectures are always a feature of the LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY, whose performances are given on Saturday evenings in the Vaughan College. Names on the current syllabus include Ivor Montagu and Richard Southern.

The EDINBURGH FILM GUILD now has a clubroom and library, open daily, at the Monseigneur Café, Princes Street. Performances continue to be held in the Caley on Sundays and are followed by discussions over tea. These have been contributed to by, among others, John Grierson, Paul Rotha, Jenny Brown, Edwin Muir, Ian Whyte and Professor Talbot Rice.

An INVERNESS FILM SOCIETY has now been formed, with Evan Barron, Editor of the *Inverness Courier*, as chairman. The Hon. Secretary is John Mitchell, Royal Bank Buildings, Inverness. The Society will hold shows during the week and, generally, aims to stimulate an interest in intelligent cinema throughout the North of Scotland.

The ETON COLLEGE FILM SOCIETY has been revived, following completion of alterations in the school hall. Performances consist of features with an educational value, comedies and news-reels.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY is one of the most alive bodies in the provinces. With a subscription of only half-a-crown it organises lectures, exhibitions and demonstrations, and issues a monthly bulletin of film recommendations. An interesting series of talks on famous directors has been arranged, and other lectures have been given by Mary Field, W. H. George, and Alistair Cooke. The Society has its own clubroom and library at Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool.

The SCOTTISH FILM COUNCIL (of the B.F.I.) now issues a monthly Bulletin containing general news of Scottish interest and notes of films generally released. It is edited by C. A. Oakley, 188 Hyndland Road, Glasgow, W.2.

MAIDENHEAD has now a Film Society with S. J. Chippingdale Watsham, 27 High Street, Maidenhead, as organiser. Monthly performances are given on Sunday afternoons.

THE FILM SOCIETY OF AYRSHIRE is a new organisation serving the towns of Kilmarnock, Ayr, Prestwick, Troon and Girvan and the surrounding countryside. Sunday performances are given at Prestwick. The Hon. Secretary is J. A. Paton Walker, 5 St. Marnock Street, Kilmarnock.

Another new venture is the WOLVERHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY, of which P. W. Pryde, 78 Belmont Road, Wolverhampton, is secretary. The council includes Leslie B. Duckworth, film critic of the *Express and Star*, the Director of Education, Principal of the Art School, and the Civic Development officer.

Few societies are in the enviable position of the BILLINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, which showed a cash balance of £104 in its annual report. The Society has no formal membership, tickets being sold at the box-office in the usual way. Performances are given twice-nightly on Wednesdays once a month, and audiences of a thousand are common. The secretary is H. S. Coles, 3 Cambridge Terrace, Norton-on-Tees.

The ABERDEEN FILM SOCIETY, formed last year, has now a membership of almost 750—bearing out the contention that Aberdeen is one of the most cinema-conscious cities in the country. Sunday shows are given and lectures arranged. The Hon. Secretary is A. L. Stephen Mitchell, 15 Golden Square, Aberdeen.

A similar arrangement is in operation in COLNE, Lancs., where the local Literary Society holds a monthly Club Night in the Savoy cinema. Programmes for the current season include *Maskerade*, *M*, and *Der Traumende Mund*. The Society has succeeded in arousing a genuine interest in such films in the district. Lectures are also arranged. The secretary is Chas. Hargreaves, Greystones, Colne, Lancs.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY now holds its performances at the Monseigneur, Piccadilly. Lectures have been given by Andrew Buchanan, president of the society, Ivor Montagu, Robert Herring, Lee Garmes, Marie Seton, and Oswell Blakeston. The secretary is H. A. Green, 6 Carysfort Road, N.16.

DUNDEE AND ST. ANDREW'S FILM SOCIETY, recently formed, is probably the only society which holds two shows on one day in two separate towns. Films are taken by road and ferry after the afternoon performance in Dundee to St. Andrews for another show in the evening. The Hon. Secretary is G. E. Geddes, Scotswood, Wormit.

TYNESIDE F.S.

The men who run it

The Tyneside Film Society started at a public meeting held in Newcastle in December, 1932, and began active work in January, 1934. Within twelve months the membership had risen to 800, and hopes are entertained of reaching the 1,000 mark during the present session.

Performances are given on Sunday evenings in Newcastle's most comfortable cinema, the Haymarket.

The initiative in founding the Society was taken by Ernest Dyer, a local schoolmaster who has served as its Chairman ever since. Dyer has been associated with many progressive social youth movements on Tyneside.

For the past two years he has been acting, under the name of "Frank Evans," as film critic to the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* the North-East's most influential paper, and his criticisms—which at first aroused bitter hostility in trade circles—have undoubtedly helped to raise the standard of film taste in the district. He has recently returned from a study of Russian film production.

The Society took a great step forward when M. C. Pottinger became its Secretary. Pottinger, who is a Scot, is in private life a librarian and Hon. Secretary of the Northern Regional Library System. Before the formation of the Tyneside Film Society he was experimenting at the Newcastle "Lit. and Phil." with free exhibitions of documentaries to unemployed men and to school children, in co-operation with the City Education Department. At present 300-400 school children are attending the Lit. and Phil. theatre each Monday when exhibitions of non-fiction 16mm. sound films, linked up with the school curriculum, take place.

Another prominent member of the Committee is Arthur Greaves, Chairman of Montagu Amateur Pictures, whose colour film *Seven Spirits of the Rainbow* has just been awarded the special plaque of the Royal Photographic Society for the most meritorious film submitted in its open competition.

AMATEURS FILM FISH

Despite wild weather, the Caithness Film Society, leading amateur group in the far North of Scotland, is busy shooting scenes for an ambitious documentary of the seine net fishing industry. Scenes are also being taken in the fishermen's homes, and sets of the interiors of a cabin and an engine-room are being specially constructed by members. Impressive cliff and shore scenery will provide spectacular backgrounds.

Films of Caithness made by the Society circulate widely in Canada and the United States.

MOL, MASTER OF MICROBES

In Haarlem lives a man whose films have been seen by millions all over the world. His name is J. F. Mol. He makes short films about unicellular beings. They tell in less than a minute how a flower comes to blossom or how a spider provides for his primary wants.

Mol turned to scientific films when he met Professor Siedentopf from Gena, the first man to succeed in combining microscope and camera. His microscopical films were the first ever shown to the world.

Mol had from boyhood studied plants and insects. When he met Siedentopf he saw the chance of putting what had until then been a

hobby, into practical use. He studied with Siedentopf until the latter retired. Mol carried on by himself.

From Bulb to Flower and *The World of Crystallines*, two of his later films, have been shown to a good many scientific societies all over the world. He made a film for the Dutch Red Cross about the malaria germ (on the lines of the late Dr. Canti's film). It drew the attention of the International Health Board of the Rockefeller Foundation.

When filming through a microscope Mol met many problems outside those usually encountered in ordinary filming. The first of these was light. He found that he needed enormous quantities of it. Then came difficulties with his "models." They didn't like so much light and either rolled themselves into a shapeless ball, kept running out of the camera's vision, or died and made an end to it.

EIGHTEEN FEET A MONTH

After overcoming these microbe difficulties, Mol set himself to the study of plant life, photographing the life of flowers. His studio is equipped with automatic apparatus. "This installation," he said, in referring to it, "works automatically. Every quarter of an hour, or every hour if I wish, this electrical plant sets curtains, spotlight and camera in movement, and each time one picture is made. Sometimes only twenty-four pictures (frames) a day are obtained, so in a month the filmstrip is exposed over not more than six metres, a projection of a bit over half-a-minute."

Recently he installed apparatus for making sound on 16mm. film for educational purposes.

Mol had been destined to go into the fruit business. But the development of his natural hobby led him away from fruit into film making. "I was born in one of the smallest villages in Holland," he said, "surrounded by fields and woods. Nothing was more natural than that I should take a great interest in nature."

His companions on his excursions into the woods were his microscope and still camera.

Mol's films include "Malaria," "World of Nature," "Life in a drop of water," "Our Blood," and "Lobster Nurseries."

BOOK REVIEWS

THE CINEMA AND THE SCHOOL. By W. H. George, B.Sc. Pitmans, 3s. 6d.

FILM AND THE SCHOOL. Edited by J. A. Lauwerys, B.Sc. Christophers, 3s. 6d.

These books show two ways of attacking the same problem. Mr. George has chosen the practical method. He took a projector into the classroom and tried to find out by trial and error what could be done.

The drawback in this plan is that its general impressions and personal investigations do not quite establish proof.

Mr. Lauwerys has tried the other way, and has engaged the services of experts to write for him. Here we have method number two—scientific research, and the working of control classes to a schedule prepared by experts. The trouble with this method is that it sometimes proves what it wants to prove without close enough regard to facts.

Mr. George, obviously expert in the business of teaching, has done some good pioneering. But his energy is not a complete guarantee of the truth of his generalisations. His book gives the lie of the land, and makes a good starting point for organised experiments.

Some chapters in Mr. Lauwerys' book show the same lack of methodical research, but, in general, it is clear and concise.

A teacher once said that a schoolmaster's forty years' experience might only represent forty years of teaching in the wrong way. In this country we have not yet had film investigation as important as that organised by the Payne Fund in U.S.A. When we have, writers on educational cinema can dogmatise more freely. Till then, books like these do very well, but they lack authority.

TWENTIETH CENTURY LIBRARY: THE PRESS. By A. J. Cummings. John Lane, 3s. 6d.

An eloquent plea for the continued freedom of the British Press by one of the most reliable of English journalists.

With broadcasting and television under state control, the need for a free Press is evident, but to the layman this concise essay on the past and present conditions of the Press in Europe and America makes an admirable introduction to a subject of endless interest and importance.

PLAN FOR CINEMA. By Dallas Bower. Dent, 6s.

Mr. Bower's plan lacks nothing in boldness. He foresees the evolution of a "solid" cinema—coloured, stereoscopic, freed from the picture-frame of the screen—which would lend itself to "a spatial re-creation of activity."

For the projection of such films he postulates a cylindrical screen. This in turn would entail a circular auditorium, and the result would be a reversion to the arena of ancient times.

How Mr. Bower proposes to interest Wardour Street in such an astounding reformation of the popular cinema is not explained. Nor can one take seriously his belief that the solid cinema might mean a resuscitation of poetic drama. He claims that *Hamlet* would be better mounted in an arena than on an ordinary stage, which suggests that he considers the setting more important than the spoken word.

Wants Verbal Television

Bower's muddled argument for this "film theatre" (not helped by persistent digression) builds up to a prophecy that the great artists of the future will use the solid cinema as their medium. The dialogue film, he thinks, will survive as the form best suited to television.

Intermingled with his extravagant statements are some which appear well-founded. In demolishing the claims of montage-built cinema to rank as art he points out that "whilst we know selection to be an integral part of creation in all art, selection in the editing process is no more than discrimination." And it is probably true that the greatest art-work of the future will be produced collectively under the guidance of men who, directly uncreative themselves, will use individual artists as their instruments of creation.

DAVID GASCOIGNE	*Man's Life is This Meat*	**3/6**
DYLAN THOMAS	*18 Poems*	**3/6**
GEORGE BARKER	*Preliminary Poems*	**2/6**

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FIRE AND THE CENSOR

Official intervention has, before now, stopped amateur performances, and on several occasions prosecution has been instigated.

WFN offers to organisers of occasional film shows a succinct statement of the rules to be observed.

The strictness of film censorship and the penalties attendant on infringement of the regulations are not always fully realised. Secretaries of film societies, schoolmasters and the organisers of periodical displays of films should note the following points:

1. Films to be shown to an audience in licensed premises must have been submitted to and approved by the National Board of Film Censors.
2. In addition to the National Censorship, local censorship is exercised by County and Municipal authorities, *e.g.*, L.C.C. Such bodies have power to demand a preview of any film which does not carry the National "U" certificate, and to refuse permission for any such film to be shown in a licensed hall.
3. To allow children under 16 years of age, unaccompanied by an adult, to see films bearing an "A" certificate, may bring prosecution resulting in a heavy fine and possibly in cancellation of licence.
4. When a display is given in *unlicensed* premises to a private, specially invited audience, to whom no charge is made, the censorship regulations *do not apply*.

REPRODUCTION OF MUSIC

Amateur exhibitors often fall into error and bring unlooked-for liabilities on their societies through ignorance of the laws governing the reproduction of music. They should know that practically all music is protected for the composers by the Performing Rights Society, of 53 Margaret Street, London, W.1. A fee is payable for every mechanical reproduction of music, whether from film or disc, whether in licensed or unlicensed premises, unless such music is not copyright or the hall is in possession of a licence from this society.

In addition, the interests of the gramophone companies are also protected, and "the right to play a gramophone record by means of a pick-up needle, electric or otherwise" must be obtained from their representatives, The Phonographic Performances Ltd., 144 Wigmore Street, W.1.

USE OF INFLAMMABLE FILM

Serious consideration should be given to the choice of a hall for a display at which inflammable film is to be used. In this matter all organisers should be conversant with the pamphlet *Statutory Rules and Orders No.* 983, 1923, which is obtainable from H.M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

The following points indicate the scope of the regulations and the degree of safety demanded by the authorities:

1. The exhibitor must give at least 14 days' clear notice to the local Chief Constable of the intention to show *inflammable* films. The name and situation of the hall to be used should be given, along with date and time proposed. A survey by the local authority will decide whether the premises comply with the terms of the Cinematograph Act, 1909.

2. The Hall

(*a*) All exits must be constructed to open outwards on pressure from within.

(*b*) There must be separate means of entrance and exit.

3. Projectors

(*a*) If a projector is erected in a place to which the public have access, effective means must be taken to maintain a clear space of three feet around the projectors. No unauthorised person is allowed in this reserved space and no smoking is permitted within it.

(*b*) Projectors must be housed in an all-metal fire-resisting enclosure, which should stand clear of all entrances and exits.

4. Power

(*a*) All electric wiring must be so encased as to prevent its contact with film.

(*b*) Each electric light or power circuit must be fitted with a separate switch which should be within easy reach of the operator.

(*c*) No illuminant other than electric light in hermetically sealed lamps is permitted. The heat of the illuminant and its position in relation to the optical system must be such that it is impossible for the rays of light to ignite stationary film.

5. The Enclosure

(*a*) The enclosure must be fitted with self-closing, fire-resisting shutters to cover the port holes. These must be operable from the interior and exterior.

(*b*) Spool boxes must be made of fire-resisting material, and of such a pattern that, when closed, flame cannot come into contact with the contents.

(*c*) The capacity of spool boxes must not be more than 1,000 feet, and they must be easily detachable from the apparatus.

(*d*) Not more than three spool boxes are allowed in the auditorium at one time. Other boxes must be stored in closed metal containers in an approved place outside the auditorium.

(*e*) The lighting of the hall must be under the control of the operator from his box, and an alternative control, if not demanded, is advisable.

6. Operators

A competent operator over 18 years of age must be in charge throughout the display, and his competent assistant must be over 16 years of age.

N.B.—The amateur will welcome the knowledge that, when "non-flam" film is employed, the regulations of the Cinematograph Act do not apply, and when an *unlicensed* hall is used no restriction beyond that of the ordinary conduct of a public meeting can be enforced. It is advisable to notify such a display to the local Chief Constable, and to provide him with a declaration to the effect that only "non-flam" film will be used. Such notification is imperative in the case of *licensed* halls.

ARE AMATEURS IMPOTENT?

Some opinions were asked by the WFN on the value of the work of film amateurs. Here they are, condensed:

NORMAN WILSON:
Most ciné camera owners belong to the vast army of snap-shooters. For the most part they play at Hollywood. Serious workers are pathetically few. There are few amateur experiments in technique, documentaries, films of social endeavour. Perhaps there are a dozen people scattered throughout the country who are persevering gallantly with fine purpose. But that is a small number to be drawn from the 250,000 amateur film makers in this country.

There are many urgent subjects, neglected by the commercial producers. The recording of local history, the publicising of local industries, social services, youths' organisations, health and housing schemes all demand disinterested film treatment. There is, too, the educational film, to be moulded to local requirements.

If amateur film production is to count for anything a new type of ciné worker must develop. With something to say, something to hammer home, he will turn inevitably to film.

PETER LE NEVE FOSTER, honorary Secretary, Manchester Film Society, speaks for the amateur film maker:

My own experience is that the alleged potential demand for films of local history, etc., simply does not exist outside the imaginations of film journalists.

I know of films of local events which, when offered to municipalities free, were refused. I know of film societies who have offered to make films of regional geography and history at cost price, at an outside figure of £15 per reel, and have been refused by public authorities. I know, too, that when an amateur film club gives the *première* of some appalling travesty of commercial dramatic production the show is attended by the local M.P. and the producers are applauded by the Mayor and other civic dignitaries.

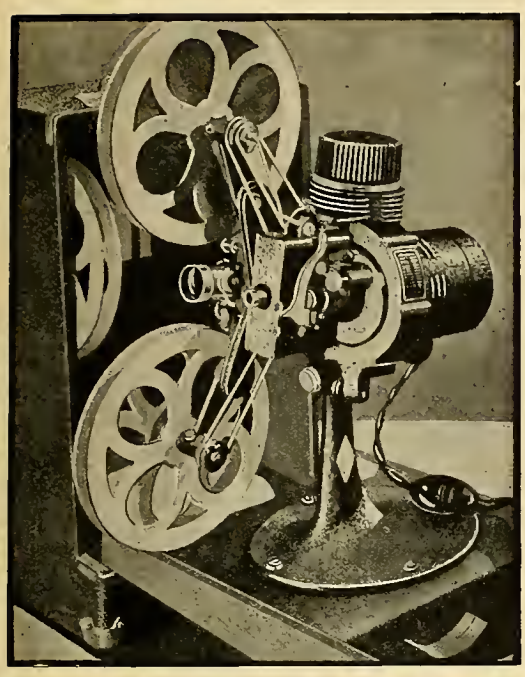
Amateurs are on constant look-out for subjects, and one subject is as good as another to most of them. They might make films about social services if they were likely to get any encouragement. But they are not likely to stand through a hail of brickbats to do so when they can get bouquets handed to them *ad lib.* for turning out rubbish.

STANLEY L. RUSSELL, Meteor Film Producing Society, Glasgow, says:

They say that only a few of us amateur film makers use our camera with any degree of intelligence and construction, that the remainder take snapshots.

Film making with the amateur is a hobby, not a full time job. He is cramped by lack of time and circumstance, and does a straight job to suit himself. His chief worry is choice of subject and he has no taste for the publicising of social services, but shoots to please himself and his friends.

When amateur film makers succeed they go over to professional film making. Who knows but that the amateur group may have been left sterile through the loss to professionalism of a great many of their members?



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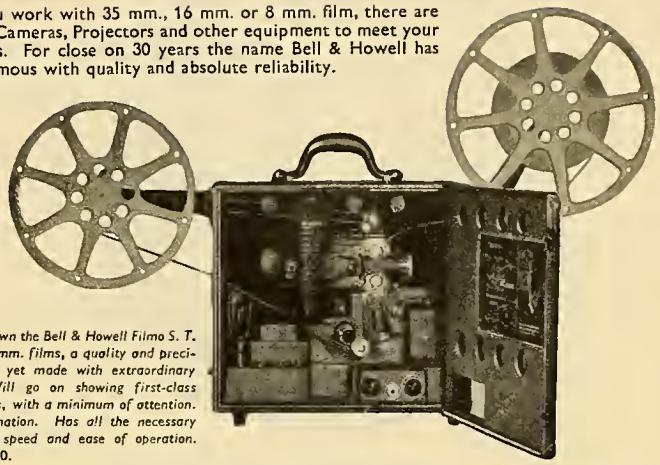

On the left is shown the Bell & Howell Filmo S. T. Projector for 16 mm. films, a quality and precision instrument, yet made with extraordinary sturdiness. Will go on showing first-class pictures for years, with a minimum of attention. 750 watt illumination. Has all the necessary refinements for speed and ease of operation. Price £47. 10. 0.

Above is Bell & Howell's 16 mm. Home Talkie Outfit—the Filmosound. The 750 watt illumination of the picture and 18 watts undistorted output provided by the powerful amplifier, give picture and sound bright and loud enough for an audience as large as 2000. Perfect co-ordination of picture and sound. Constant speed. Simplicity and ease of operation. Further details from the manufacturers.

SIGHT AND SOUND

QUARTERLY
SIXPENCE

FULLY ILLUSTRATED | WINTER | VOL. 4 No. 16

JOHN GRIERSON—
ART AND THE ANALYSTS

RUDOLF ARNHEIM—
THE COLOUR FILM

W. E. WILLIAMS—
FILM AND LITERATURE

H. D. WALEY—
HOME-MADE DIAGRAM FILMS

ALISTAIR COOKE and A. VESSELO—
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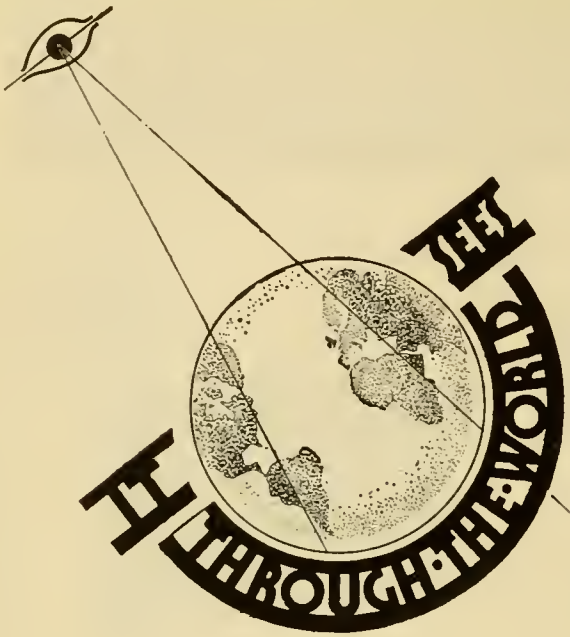


ISSUED MONTHLY

No. 5

(Released March 23rd) contains

The British Islands America "Annexed"

Breaking up the Strike-breaking Racket

The Rise of British Shipping

THE MARCH OF TIME

A landmark in film journalism *(Morning Post)* and the most original step the cinema has taken *(Daily Herald).*

Distributed by
Radio Pictures Ltd.
Cert. "U"

THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

SENSATIONAL NEW FEATURE FROM U.S.A.

A new series of shorts now in Columbia vaults brings to this country one of the most celebrated American radio features. The series consists of personal talks on the lines of the heartsease columns run by Hearst's and Scripps' newspapers, and originated by Elsie Robinson's "Listen, World!" WFN learns that personal problems of marriage, misfits, juvenile hankerings and inhibitions are dealt with.

The film series in America follows newspaper and radio practice by inviting clients to send in their personal posers. A large staff of stenographers under expert—or semi-expert—guidance operate this nation-wide confession machine.

Voice of Experience-film and *Voice of Experience*-radio operate jointly in the U.S.A. For obvious reasons it is doubtful if the B.B.C. will dare a tie-up in this country, particularly if it involves a correspondence service.

The series would probably command a wide clientèle, but psychological advice by correspondence may lay itself open to complaint by disappointed clients and professional operators alike. Fears of wondering husbands carrying complaint to the House of Commons, and of disappointed wives storming the lobbies of Langham Place might deter B.B.C. chiefs.

The series suggests a talks sequence by accredited psychologists and other experts who concentrate on scientific information. Aldous Huxley and McKnight Kauffer were discussing the possibility of the subject twelve months ago. The B.B.C. might check with Huxley.

THE BIG TENT

WFN has examined the origin of *Voice of Experience* and offers the following communication.

Oratory is a traditional form of entertainment in America. At country fairs in the last century. the witty, bombastic, stirring and persuasive speeches of the patent medicine vendors often outrivalled other features for the attention of visitors.

At a later date a remarkable institution of popular education was developed in rural districts and flourished because of this preference for listening to oral bombast. This was the Chautauqua circuit. A group of speakers toured the country and delivered addresses in large tents pitched wherever the largest audiences could be attracted.

Around this circuit, after a long and remarkable career in politics, moved the "silver-tongued orator," William Jennings Bryan—the most popular public speaker America has ever known. To make the ordeal easier for Bryan his appearances were staged in the form of debates. A young man named M. Sayle Taylor, winner of a school debating contest, was chosen to be Bryan's foil. They toured the country together for some time. The young man learned to talk.

THE SCIENCES

In the following years Taylor seems to have pursued his interests in the new and sometimes pseudo - sciences — sexology, psycho - analysis, hypnotism, spiritualism, electro-therapy, etc., etc. He also found time to study and experiment in the fields of education, prison reform and marriage reform. In 1928 he was engaged in giving talks in rented halls throughout America. Afternoons he addressed women, evenings men. He sold both audiences his books and pamphlets on the how and why of the creative impulse.

In 1932, with the increasing popularity of radio broadcasting, Taylor's audience increased in spectacular fashion. Under the anonymity of his radio name, *Voice of Experience*, he has now become a household god of America's dejected. His daily stunt consists of answering over the air the intimate problems sent to him by his audience. He receives over two thousand of these every day, which is believed to be the *entire* correspondence figure of Broadcasting House. They are concerned with domestic affairs, economic matters, religious longings, sex, etc.

PUTTING IT OVER

Taylor's answers are remarkable. His western speech is studded with semi-scientific terminology. His ideas combine the morality of a baptist preacher, the scientific arrogance of a biological chemist and the audience-coddling of a small town politician. His manner is always intimate. Each member of the vast audience is made to feel that he alone is the beneficiary of this remarkable fund of wisdom.

Being an unseen adviser of a nation has paid Taylor well. He has several honorary degrees from relatively unknown colleges. His income from the advertisers who sponsor his programme is said to be over eight hundred pounds a week, and this is supplemented by money received from writing and publishing.

Such a phenomenon was not long to be neglected by the astute film companies. Here was a grand excuse for selling sentimentality, morality, sob-stories and the rest of their favourite themes—with the added attraction of a ready-made name. They have done their job well.

Associated Realists

The need to preserve the character of the documentary film in its application to a wider field of subjects has led to the formation of Associated Realist Film Producers. The organisation will act as film consultants to Government departments, public services, educational authorities, industrial and commercial firms, and others anxious to make their activities known to as wide a public as possible.

A.R.F.P. is not itself a production or distributing company. It will co-operate with existing film companies in the production and distribution of films. The services offered include the preparation of scenarios, the drawing up of complete production programmes, the provision of film officers to handle productions, the arrangement of distribution, and the appointment of qualified film directors, producers, and actors.

The associated producers are Edgar Anstey, Andrew Buchanan, Arthur Elton, J. B. Holmes, Stuart Legg, Paul Rotha, Donald Taylor, Harry Watt and Basil Wright. All are well-known directors of documentary films.

NEWSREEL IN THE MELTING POT

Since their beginning news reels have contented themselves with presenting mere pictorial headlines of current events. Today they are striving not for better content but for faster presentation. Their struggles to compete with rival news reels in faster presentation of their news has reached a craze.

They lay claim to freedom of the screen. It is as good a claim to freedom as that of the Press.

They are content to show us the surface of things. Statesmen gather for a congress and go away again. But what goes on at the congress is a blank. The news reel, as constituted today, never delves beneath the surface, never shows up any problem, economic, social or financial. Annual events are thought to be really vital news and appear as regularly as clockwork.

The great introduction of sound meant little to news reels except the introduction of a commentator telling us what is already disclosed in the pictures.

But recently two powerful new factors have appeared, *March of Time* and Television. *March of Time* has dared to approach news from a fundamental viewpoint. Its more leisurely output permits it to give a pictorial analysis of contemporary events. Television has not yet shown us what it intends to do.

So we have on one hand conventional news reels, intent on increasing circulation and not regarding the *March of Time* as a menace. On the other hand is *March of Time*, out for greater story content, and not seeing the news reel as a serious obstacle to its development. And Television stands on one side, soon to be in need of news in large quantities for its daily programmes. What is the desirable outcome? First: that the *March of Time* shall become the news reel of the future, with the existing news reel nothing more than a stop press column at the end. That it shall become more powerful than it is at present, and more impartial. Second: that television shall separate itself entirely from the film screen. That its pictorial matter shall be shaped for its special requirements, a more creative treatment of news with symbolic background. That there shall be no duplication of films for cinemas and films for television, no repetition of surface news already worn out by the cinema screen.

The old medium of the screen must find new news that matters. The new medium of the televisor must discover even newer methods of presenting the new news.

MUSIC IN FILMS

By SPIKE HUGHES

Almost the only aspect of *Modern Times* that has not been discussed by the critics is its music. For two reasons: such critics as can recognise an opera aria in a Grace Moore picture rarely know from which opera it comes anyway, and those who do recognise it do not, for the most part, concern themselves with the *musical* importance of a film. Music, in the commercial film, has played the part of a glorified Master of Ceremonies, keeping the audience amused during the long credit titles, adding a little atmosphere here and there to shots of landscape that should be accompanied by nothing but natural background sounds, if any.

Perhaps this reluctance on the part of directors to use music in a big way is due to a fear of its distracting the audience's attention.

But, if it is, why should music not be equally distracting in those rare pictures in which it has played a considerable part?

Offhand I can think of a couple of Lubitsch pictures, Clair's *Le Million*—and *Modern Times*. All films of a particular type: fantasies and satirical comedies.

In each case the music was used to give added point to comic situations, to enhance the speed of action unaccompanied by dialogue, to comment satirically, to stress some gag or other, which stressed by any other means would have amounted to over-emphasis.

Music should be functional

I have, at this moment, no views on the function of music in films. I am merely reflecting that, so far, the most successful use of music has been made when it has been used as a gag.

Thus, on reflecting upon *Modern Times*, I remember the distorted use Charlie Chaplin makes of *The Internationale* and the "Look out boys, here comes a copper!" phrase from *The Policeman's Holiday*. Each of these moments was a gag, a little commentary by the director on the action of the film.

Walt Disney is, of course, the most regular musical gagger of all. I often feel that the average member of an audience misses half the fun of *Mickey Mouse* and the *Silly Symphonies*, because so many of the gags are not only purely musical, but essentially musician's jokes.

It is a vast question, though, this question of music in motion pictures. Why should it only be used for the sake of comedy? It is all rather as though the trombone were invented for the sole purpose of making strange noises to accompany red-nosed comedians.

The melodic line

And yet—though I may be wrong—it seemed to me that the climax of *One Night of Love* was not built up by director, cameraman or actors. It was built up by the man who picked on Madame Butterfly's entrance music.

Puccini's aria with its firm melodic line did more to convince one of the "arrival" of the opera singer than any purely cinematic device could have done. Even allowing for the circumstances of the action which introduced the aria everything else that followed was in the nature of an anticlimax. It was Puccini who, in making Butterfly sing her first passage off-stage, lifted that sequence high up above the rest of the picture.

But maybe these are a musician's reactions; though I am inclined to think that serious music will get its break in pictures when another Puccini comes along. Nor do I mean to be haughty by any implication that Puccini was a composer of "cinema music," for the reason that I am not haughty about the cinema.

In its best moments the movie is worthy of the world's greatest music.

I am only concerned that they are so slow in discovering this.

MILHAUD to WORK for TOEPLITZ

GREAT COMPOSER COMPLIMENTS B.B.C.

Darius Milhaud, famous French composer and formerly a member of the group known as "The Six," is to write the music for *The Beloved Vagabond*, Toeplitz production starring Maurice Chevalier.

Milhaud has done much work for the theatre and for films.

His recent theatre work includes music for *Bolivar*, a new play by Pitoëff, and for *Sagesse*, by Claudel, intended to star Ida Rubenstein.

The films for which Milhaud has written music include Renoir's *Madame Bovary*, Painlevé's *Seahorses*, *Tartarin de Tarascon* and a new film, *Voix d'Enfants*.

"But film producers in France don't trust me," he says. "They think my music is too complicated. When I write *do re me fa sol* they say it is too difficult and modern. Modern music? There exists only good music and bad music."

LIMIT ORCHESTRAS

"Film music must never be obtrusive. It should be a necessary function of the film, simple and sparing. Therefore I always use a small orchestra for film work. Too many instruments sound thick and confused when reproduced in the cinema."

In the Chevalier film the action takes place in 1906. Milhaud plans to base his music on contemporary songs.

Questioned on how long he takes to write film music Milhaud said "You know what film people are—they want everything done in two seconds. On 'Madame Bovary' I had plenty of time—nearly four weeks. Sometimes I have a week. Sometimes two days. But I always manage somehow."

Next September the B.B.C. is to broadcast Milhaud's big dramatic work *Christophe Colomb*.

"It is wonderful how the people there are full of initiative," said Milhaud of the B.B.C., "I love working for them."

PEACE AND DYNAMITE

Nobel Script for British Production

An outstanding figure in the armament industry, Nobel, the Swedish inventor of dynamite, is also donor of the Nobel Prize for progress and development in science, art, and peace movements.

The tragic personality of this man forms the basis of a story which Friedrich Kohner wrote in collaboration with Robert Neumann, the Continental novelist.

Here they discuss their scenario, which is to be filmed by a British company.

Friedrich Kohner says:—

The intention of our film is to show how Alfred Nobel symbolises the modern contradiction between a man's personal ideals and his actions—how, by his invention of dynamite, which makes modern war possible, he nullifies the Nobel Prize founded by him to cement international friendship. All his humanity, his disinterestedness, cannot prevent dynamite, an explosive which he accidentally discovered and wishes to be used for peaceful ends, for mining, blasting tunnels, clearing harbours and canals, from being turned in the hands of profiteers to an instrument of war and murder.

Like so many of the apostles of peace in our epoch, Alfred Nobel is a preacher in the desert. Our film should emphasise that, whilst there are men who profit by war and munitions, peace is impossible and the Nobel Prize for the greatest achievements in science and art is made a mockery. And yet, we bring Nobel's destiny before the eyes of the world, not only as Warning but as Hope. For, one day, all men of good will will band themselves together in one great nation, and Alfred Nobel will be honoured as a first prophet and martyr.

Robert Neumann says:—

I have read what Friedrich Kohner has written about the Nobel film scenario on which we collaborated. I am older than he and wish good luck to the optimistic British film company who, in spite of strong American competition, bought our story.

They will shoot the film directly from the script. But, as film companies are usually afraid of new ideas, I should not be surprised to see our scenario emasculated. Their specialists will remove everything they have not come across before until it takes on the shape of a commercial proposition. However, I hope that I am wrong, and Kohner right, and that this British company will make me ashamed of my pessimism.

EISENSTEIN *DIRECTS THE RUSSIAN CHILD*

Scheduled to be finished in May, Eisenstein's next film (temporarily called "Bezhim Loog") is about Russian children. It is to show the contrast between the mentality and ideology of the Russian peasant child written of by Turgeniev in 1850 in his short story "Bezhim Loog" and the Russian child of to-day.

The story is based on the events in real life of one Pavlik Morazov, a story well known to all Russian children. Pavlik lost his life at the hands of his father for joining, against the wishes of his family, the Soviet pioneer children. He fought his part in the class battle so fiercely that it threatened the sabotaging activities of his family and his father killed him for becoming an enemy of their class.

The film begins one morning and ends the next morning. It is the day before the harvest begins. In the afternoon everyone for miles around goes out to the harvest camp to be ready for work at sunrise. The children are self-appointed guardians of the crop. From watchtowers around the fields they look out for incendiaries. And so it comes about that Pavlik is killed.

Alexander Rzheshevsky, who wrote the script, lived for two years in the actual village of Bezhim Loog to see and record the contrast between Turgeniev's child and the child of the new Soviet village.

With Eisenstein working on the new film are three of the original unit which started with him on his first film *Strike*, Edouard Tissé and two assistant directors, Mikhail Gomarov and Pera Attasheva. Two from the original corps are absent, Alexandrov and Maxim Straukh. All told there are twenty-one persons on the production, including four women, one of whom is a "cameraman."

Eisenstein describes the film as "a film about children and adults, for adults and children." To widen the child audience he plans a special version for children, playing up the action sequences, and playing down all complex dialogue.

PLOT AND LOCATION

The plot centres around a Russian village, surrounded by great wheat fields. The shooting takes place at three locations: First, Armavir, in the Azov-Black Sea district, where scenes for the harvest sequence have been shot on the Stalin State Farm. Here the harvest has for centuries been the storm centre for conflicting races fighting for its riches, tribes from the East, nations from the South, and the Russian Empire from the North.

Second, a village near Kharkov was chosen for acted scenes. At Kharkov the landscape is of a billowing type, and the road billows too, straight through the landscape. Within two weeks after the shooting commenced there passed along the road 150 tractors, and reapers, cycles, wagons, trucks, with three aeroplanes flying a few yards above the procession.

Four cameras on a tall tower filmed all possible combinations. Telephone authorities took down two kilometres of telephone poles because the road in Armavir, where some of the filming had already been done, was not wired. And besides, Eisenstein thought the telephone poles broke an otherwise beautiful landscape. All the 150 tractors were built to special order, in Kharkov.

Third, a village near Moscow for shots taken along the Moscow river. On its banks a good deal of night material has been filmed, and each morning for days, to catch the first light before the sun itself appeared, the boy hero, Stepok, lay stretched out dead for the few minutes' shooting in early morning light.

SYMBOLS AND ACTORS

The unity of place is defined in the repeated use of the Road, first as a wagon path, then as a Highway, and finally as the road through the fields along which the chief of the political department carries the dead body of the boy.

The unity is solidly established as a motive, only to be purposely broken at certain points, to produce thematic discord. This discord is sounded at each point in the film where four fighters against socialist society are shown. Barricaded in the church, the stopping place, the antithesis of the road, their anti-social actions are shown in rifle fire from the church doors.

The hunt for actors for the leading roles, for bit parts, and even mass scenes, was carried on on an enormous scale. Two days a week, for four hours, children chosen during the week by assistants, were sent to Eisenstein, five at a time. Those for mass shots were chosen for the emotional content of the scene. The mass of children for the cowboy episode, tough and dynamic in feeling, were different-faced children to those chosen for the funeral episode, with their serious eyes, and sharp features. More than 2,000 children came before the directors.

They had a difficult time finding the boy for the leading part, until finally Eisenstein found one they had all missed, a boy whose hair grew in the wrong way, whose face was not pretty, and whose voice in the test, went stiff and dull. No one but Eisenstein saw him as a child, a young pioneer, with a quick intelligence and a great emotional range.

CLASH OF GENERATIONS

The episodes of the meeting between the boy and his father were scheduled for shooting at Moscow. Stepok has been shot in the back, and has fallen from the watchtower to the little hillock island of grass below, surrounded by moonlit wheat. . . . His father creeps to look at his dead son's body, but when he sees that Stepok is still alive he takes the opportunity to gloat over how inevitably God always punishes faithless sons. He forces the boy to answer his maddening rhetorical questions, and as the first pains loosen, Stepok grows conscious that it was his father who had shot him. During the preceding night he had heard his father plotting with the four incendiaries to burn the crop on its last night. Afraid because he thinks they have killed him in order to start the fire, he attempts to crawl to warn the political department.

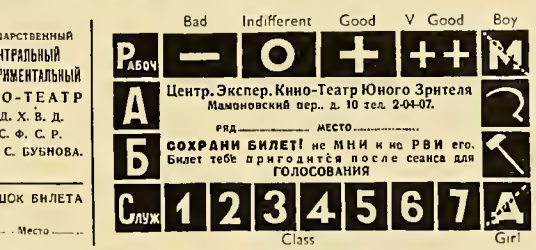
When Stepok's body is found by the other boys, they bring a doctor and the head of the politotdel who arrive just in time to know that Stepok will not live to see another day. The children will not believe that he is really dying. They insist on listening themselves to his heart with the doctor's stethoscope. The chief, instead of putting the stethoscope to Stepok's heart, puts it on the chest of another boy standing next to him. "There's Stepok's heart—listen to it beat, how strong it is," he says.

SPECTATOR TO PROVIDE CLIMAX

The film ends with mass scenes of children moving along the banks of the river. It has no further climax as was provided in *Chapayev*, when Chapayev's death was avenged by a new victory of the Red army, blowing the Whites off their last cliff. Eisenstein wants each spectator to provide this further climax for himself. He wants Stepok's murder to be avenged by each spectator. Eisenstein caught small-pox in October, holding up the production until December. This was just before the church scenes were to be shot. He himself selected all the objects that were to decorate the interior of a church set, and it was believed that he caught the germ while poring over ikons and embroideries. While in the hospital he celebrated his 38th birthday.

WHEN RUSSIAN CHILDREN GO TO THE MOVIES

Soviet Russia has an organisation with the resounding title "Central House of Children's Art Education." It is devoted to all problems relative to the æsthetic impulses of children, and is responsible also for the supervision of 100 children's theatres, 55 puppet or marionette shows, about 70 cinemas and 70 music schools.



TESTING FOR TALENT

Scientific research is the main object, and various experiments have been carried out to test children's reactions to plays and films. One method is to issue to each child a criticism ticket, with various hieroglyphics round the edge.

In general, it is involved in all matters relating to theatre, music, film, radio, painting, sculpture and dancing. Its music and fine arts programmes are compulsory in all ordinary schools.

As there are 120,000 schools, of which 20,000 have radio sets and 4,000 are equipped with cinemas, its director, V. O. Zeldovich, has a busy time and a big staff.

Central House also works outside the schools, in towns, villages and summer camps. Recently a new decree enforced the building of special children's art-rooms in all new tenements; Central House will have charge of these.

By tearing or punching the correct sections, the child indicates its class, age, sex, and its frank opinion of the performance it has just seen.

Central House, by this method, and by close collaboration with teachers, collects sufficient data to issue reports and pamphlets, and also a fortnightly magazine with a circulation of 35,000. The prize system seems to be going strong, although the world "examination" has been eliminated in favour of "norm." On passing a "norm," a child gets a badge and a special booklet, and Central House is enabled to find out real talent and see it is well directed.

STROHEIM—POE STORY

The opening attraction at the rebuilt "Rialto" (corner of Broadway and 42nd Street) was *The Crime of Dr. Crespi*, from a story by Edgar Allan Poe. Neither producers, director nor actors were well known. In the leading part, however, there was a name that made you look again: Erich von Stroheim. A huge success!

Dr. Crespi's young assistant marries the woman with whom the doctor is in love. The young husband meets with an accident and only Crespi is able to save his life. He does it. But gives him a secret injection as the result of which the patient apparently dies, but in reality is alive and conscious.

Kept in this condition by daily injections, the assistant experiences his own death, the consoling of his wife by Crespi, his funeral, and finally the clods falling on his coffin. And he knows that in eight hours he will awake to life again only to die by suffocation.

Not a box-office picture you would think. Actually there is a last-minute rescue brought about by Crespi's mad boasting. But it is Stroheim's performance that has brought New York flocking. Stroheim lives Crespi. You watch the veins vibrating in his forehead, you see his hands sweating, and yet you have a feeling that a lot of this is the result of the inexperience of the director and the preference of the cameraman for arty close-ups. A more-luck-than-judgment production.

But Stroheim dominates everything.

It is impossible to imagine this passionate, disorderly talent under a strong director. When I once mentioned Stroheim to one of the Warner brothers he answered, with a gesture of someone removing dust from his coat, "Too much of a genius!" *H.L.*

BELGIAN SENATE DISCUSSES FILMS

The Belgian senate is becoming film-conscious. Proposals for state production of documentary and educational films formed an important part of a February debate on the budget of the Ministry of Public Instruction.

During the debate M. Van der Neste asked the Minister of Public Instruction whether he had considered the film as a medium of public information.

He brought to the attention of the Senate the success of the G.P.O. Film Unit at the Brussels Festival in 1935, and emphasised the great international influence which would result from similar production in Belgium.

The Minister replied that his department was already examining the question.

"We plan to build up a national service of educational films," he said. "At the same time we hope to provide material assistance for Belgian producers."

WFN now learns that the Vicomte du Pré, Director General of the Office Commerciale de l'Etat, has announced to a meeting of the Federation des Chambres de Commerce that his department proposes to produce several films publicising the chief export industries of the country.

Henri Storck, Belgium's Number One documentary director, has already produced two films for the Office Commerciale. The first deals with the Belgian cotton industry, the second with the manufacture of furniture and tapestry.

HEGIRA

Erich Pommer	Ufa chief and discoverer of F. W. Murnau, Marlene Dietrich, and others.	Working with Korda.
Fritz Lang	*Dr. Mabuse*, *Metropolis*, and *M.*	*Mob Rule* for M.G.M. in Hollywood.
G. W. Pabst	*Secrets of a Soul*, *Beggar's Opera* and *Kameradschaft*.	In Hollywood making preparations for the first operatic colour film, *Faust*, by Gounod.
H. R. Sokal	Producer of Arnold Fanck and Leni Riefenstahl films (*White Hell of Pitz Palu*, *Avalanche . . .*).	Supervising *Dusty Ermine* for Julius Hagen, Twickenham.
Arnold Pressburger	Producer of the Jan Kiepura films.	Producing for United Artists in England.
Alexander Korda	Hungarian newspaper man discovered by Count Sacha Kolowrat in Vienna. With Ufa in Berlin, First National in Hollywood (*Helen of Troy*), and Paramount in France.	Chief of London Films.
Max Schach	Bought Emelka Films from the Reich.	With United Artists in England, Alexander Korda, and his own companies, Capitol Films and Trafalgar.
Hans Brahm	Director of the famous Vienna Burg Theatre.	Director of *Broken Blossoms*, with Bernard Vorhaus as Associate Producer.
Kurt Bernhardt	Directed *The Last Company* and *The Rebel* in Germany.	Directing Maurice Chevalier in *The Beloved Vagabond*.
Carl Mayer	Germany's film poet. Author of *Caligari*, *Last Laugh* and *Ariane*.	Helping Paul Czinner and Elisabeth Bergner in *As You Like It*.
Andre Andrejev	Germany's most famous art-director.	Working in France and England. *Taras Bulba* (Harry Baur) and *The Beloved Vagabond* (Maurice Chevalier).
Walter Reisch	Author of *Liebes Kommando* and *Maskerade in Vienna*.	Directing in Vienna. Latest film, *Silhouettes*.
Max Ophuls	Director of *Liebelei*.	Going to Moscow.
Helmar Lerski	Celebrated cameraman and still photographer.	In Palestine. Directed *Aodah* (Work), a realist film.
Gunther Stapenhorst	Associate Producer at Ufa.	Starting up in England.
Peter Witt	Newspaper reporter in Berlin.	Co-director of Reunion Films in England, and now joining Fox Films export department.
Alex. Strasser	Cameraman and director of realist films.	With Gasparcolour as director-cameraman.
Robert Wiene	Director of *Inri*, *Caligari* and *Crime and Punishment* (1921).	Formed his own company in England.
Kurt Courant	Ace cameraman.	Cameraman in England, but ambitious to become director.
Fritz Kortner	Stage actor, film star, author and director in Germany.	Played in *Chu Chin Chow*, *Abdul the Damned* and *Crouching Beast*. Wants to produce in England.
Moholy-Nagy	Professor in the best school of craftsmanship in Germany.	He did some special trick effects on *Shape of Things to Come*, and also made a realist film about lobsters for Korda. Continuing his experiment on stills and colour.
Berthold Viertel	Author of lyrical poems. Famous stage director in Berlin.	Directing in England and U.S.A. Last film, *Cecil Rhodes*.
Erno Metzner	First-class art director. Directed *Uberfall*, *Freie Fahrt* (Sybilla Schmitz, now the most famous German film star, played her first role).	Art-director with Gaumont British.
Eugene Schufftan	Inventor of the money-saving Schufftan trick process, and an ace cameraman.	In England and France as camera man.
Conrad Veidt	Famous film star.	Starring in England. Now with Alexander Korda.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

PEOPLE WITH PURPOSES

NEW SPONSORS.—Dramatic developments are expected this year in the field of sponsored films. The sweeping successes gained by sponsored films at the Brussels International Film Festival have brought to the attention of Government departments and industrial firms the possibility of making good films from themes of social and commercial interest. A recent *Times* editorial indicated the great future opening out for films of fact and gave high authority to the movement. If half the film policies now being hatched in public relations departments of our national organisations mature, this year will see a huge increase in films available for educational and non-theatrical circulation.

FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS INTERESTED.—One extraordinary result of Brussels is reported by members of the G.P.O. unit. As many as seven foreign governments have approached individual directors of the unit with a view to their co-operation in schemes of national and international enlightenment regarding the countries concerned. Near East governments were strongly represented in the approaches.

UNEMPLOYMENT.—The Ministry of Labour has gone into production with two films describing the work of the unemployment camps. Strand Films are producing. Anstey and Shaw, of the A.R.F.P. group have been brought in for direction. Anstey was recently responsible for two of the Gas films, *Dinner Hour* and *Housing Problems*; Shaw made *Sea Change* for the Orient. The Labour films are scheduled for early completion.

MINISTRY INTERESTED.—The presence of a high Air Ministry official at a recent Press reception given by the *March of Time* may, or may not, suggest an Air Ministry subject in a future issue of the reel. The researches and industrial feats behind the remarkable development of the aeroplane industry are particularly attractive to actuality film makers.

DEATH-GAS-SLUMS.—The reaction of the motoring Press to *Death on the Roads* is reported elsewhere. In general, Press critics have complained that the film is not vicious enough and that the propagandist element should have been stronger. This is a new kind of comment on propagandist films. Where, as in the case of housing and transport, the issue hits the public conscience, directors are likely to have full play for hammering home their themes. The success of *Housing Problems*, a blistering indictment of the slums made by the Gas Association, bears out this theory. *WFN* learns that more road safety films are now being planned, and that yet another national newspaper is interested.

GOLD AND STEEL.—The South African Government has recently sent over some twelve reels of film dealing with the gold and steel industries. The quality is reported as high. It is suggested that the wide circulation of British documentary films in the Union has been influential in pulling up South African standards. Gold has been cut to a two-reeler by Pathé, but not to the entire satisfaction of at least one observer who has seen the original material. The film is now circulating theatrically and, despite the complaint of our informant, has been well received. Steel is reported as the best South African material to date, with ambitious natural sound taken on location. The director is Albrecht.

WAR OFFICE AND G.B.—The War Office is believed to have lined up with Gaumont British, for the production of a large scale film. *WFN* learns that this will be produced as a studio film and will deal dramatically with life in the Army.

WEST INDIES EXPEDITION.—With the co-operation of the West Indies committee, Bruce Woolfe has equipped an expedition to do extensive shooting in the West Indies. Oil and asphalt interests are said to be involved. A large batch of geographical material will be added to the extensive school library now operated by the G.B.I. circuit. This is due for extension during the coming season. *WFN* learns that the figures of the Western Electric circuit, operating now from sixteen centres throughout the country, may be passed and that some sixty centres are under consideration by Gaumont.

BUGS, ETC.—Other G.B.I. activities include a film on the eradication and treatment of bugs, for which facilities were given by the Medical Research Council. Material taken for the Holmes film, *The Mine* has been given to the Safety in Mines Research Board to complete their 16 mm. film for mine workers. Mary Field, chief director for G.B.I., leaves presently for a camera tour of the Mediterranean. The material is for the Educational Library.

REDUCING THE LAG.—The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research has set up its own film unit and is making 16 mm. records for demonstration to commercial groups. It is hoped that, in this way, industrialists and traders will learn to benefit more quickly from laboratory discoveries, and that the lag between laboratory research and practical use will be overcome. A film recently completed described requirements for export boxes. The D.S.I.R. will have the professional aid of an A.R.F.P. director in establishing standards of cutting and photography.

CADBURY AND WEST AFRICA.—A new programme for Cadbury Brothers is reported from Publicity Films. The past policy of this firm has been concentrated on publicity films proper, but the growing demand for films of educational value has turned the Cadbury mind to considerations of documentary. *WFN* expects from the new policy a group of valuable films dealing with the geography and products of West Africa.

Other interests planning production are the Electric Lamp Manufacturers' Association, Lewis's of Liverpool, and at least two sections of the iron and steel trade.

BENOIT LEVY.—From France comes information that Benoit Levy, doyen of French educational cinema, has arranged with Hunt of General Educational Services to supply an annual group of ten films for British circulation. This new concern is believed to have Rank support and is planning effective entry in the non-theatrical market. Rank's Methodist associations will, no doubt, influence development.

AVANT-GARDE TO THE RESCUE

Revolution in Advertising Films

The growing ambition of British cinema is reflected in the new attitude to publicity or advertising films.

Until recently, when excellent advertising films in colour suddenly appeared from the Continent, these films were confined for the most part to second line houses. With colour and improved technique there is every prospect that even high-class houses will welcome them. In the upper fields novelty is an advantage, and entertainment value imperative.

In spite of steady work in cartoon by Publicity Films, Revelation Films, and others, British technique has, on the whole, lagged behind foreign. The brilliant advertising movement which took the poster to the aesthetic heights of McKnight Kauffer and established the present high levels of presentation in Press lay-out and public exhibition has had no counterpart in film publicity. The French advertising films done by Aurenche have been funnier than ours; French, German and American animation work has shown a level of technical skill far beyond anything attempted locally.

GERMAN INFLUENCE STRONG

Recent events which are likely to mark a turning point are the winning of the fantasy prize at Brussels by an English advertising film and the circulation in this country of advertising films done in Germany by the great Fischinger. The fantasy film was made in colour by Len Lye without the use of a camera. Colour rhythms, synchronised to music, were painted direct on to the celluloid. The Fischinger films were made in Gasparcolour and advertised, in animated ballet, cigarettes and the radio products of Phillips, Holland.

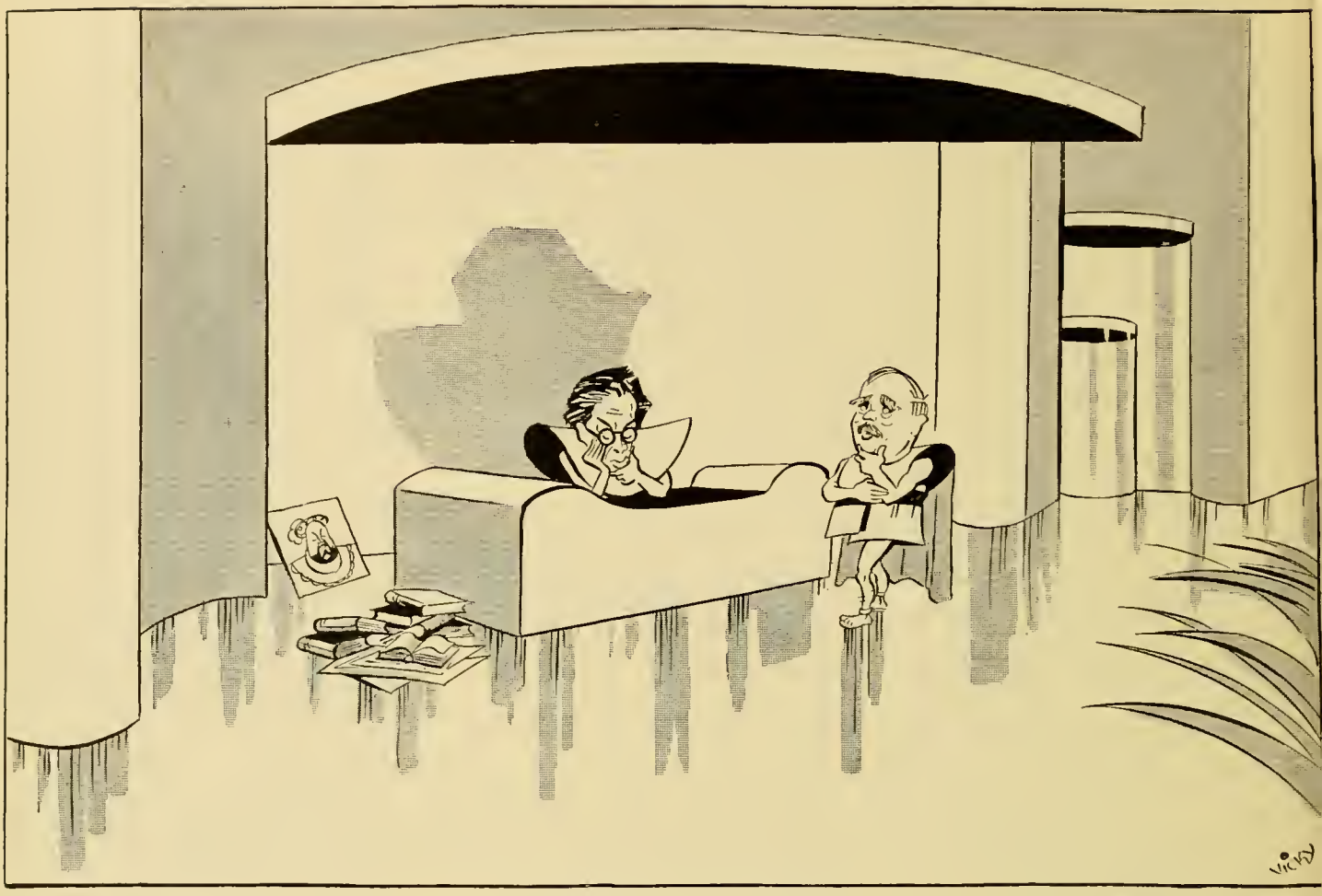
One of the Phillips films, *Ship of The Ether*, has been run extensively, without payment, so great are the charm and novelty of its technique. *Colour Box*, the Lye film, has had similar success. Recent films for Carreras and Churchman show that the lesson has been taken.

NOVELTIES PROMISED

The G.P.O. film unit reports further experiment, but on different lines. Len Lye is to do a ballet film with real dance against changing colour backgrounds for the Savings Bank. A further effort is being discussed exploiting Lotte Reiniger silhouettes. A film on slapstick comedy lines is being worked out by Coldstream for the Gas people.

The magnificent trick work of Ned Mann in *Things to Come* and an improving grip on cartoon technique are expected to have considerable influence on publicity films. These much abused films may presently come into their own if great technicians of the order of Cavalcanti, Kauffer, Fischinger, Reiniger, Ubiwerks and Lye continue to be interested. The experimental work until recently associated with *avant-gardes* and film societies appears to be the key to development.

COCKALORUM



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Another International Scandal for the "March of Time"?

FROM THE TAPE

The Intransigenant says:
''Great Britain has replied. She will, she says, joiwliwwallective action by the League of Nations. She says this, and nothing more. It is very little and does not mean very much. In order to reassure France a reply of a different character is desirable.''

Shakespeare—Hathaway

NEXT VEHICLE FOR NEAGLE

Plans to co-star Hardwicke and Neagle as Shakespeare and Ann Hathaway are announced. *WFN* recommends to the script department—more or less hopelessly—the following quotation from Joyce's *Ulysses:*

"In the years when he was living richly in royal London to pay a debt she had to borrow forty shillings from her father's shepherd . . .
And therefore he left out her name
From the first draft but he did not leave out the presents for his grand-daughter, for his daughters. For his sister, for his old cronies in Stratford and in London. And therefore when he was urged, As I believe, to name her.
He left her his
Secondbest
bed
Leftherhis
Secondbest
Bestabed
Secabest
Leftabed . . . . . .
Why did he not leave her his best bed if he wished her to snore away the rest of her nights in peace? . . . . . Don't forget Nell Gwynn Herpyllis . . . ."

Without Comment

WFN receives the following Press cutting: *Austin* (*Texas*).

"Miss Ginger Rogers has been made an admiral in the Texas navy.

"The commission was delivered to her by Mr. Allred, the governor here, as a token of the admiration felt by the people of Texas for the work of a fellow-citizen." Miss Rogers was born in Missouri . . . There is no Texas navy.

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AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

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6d.

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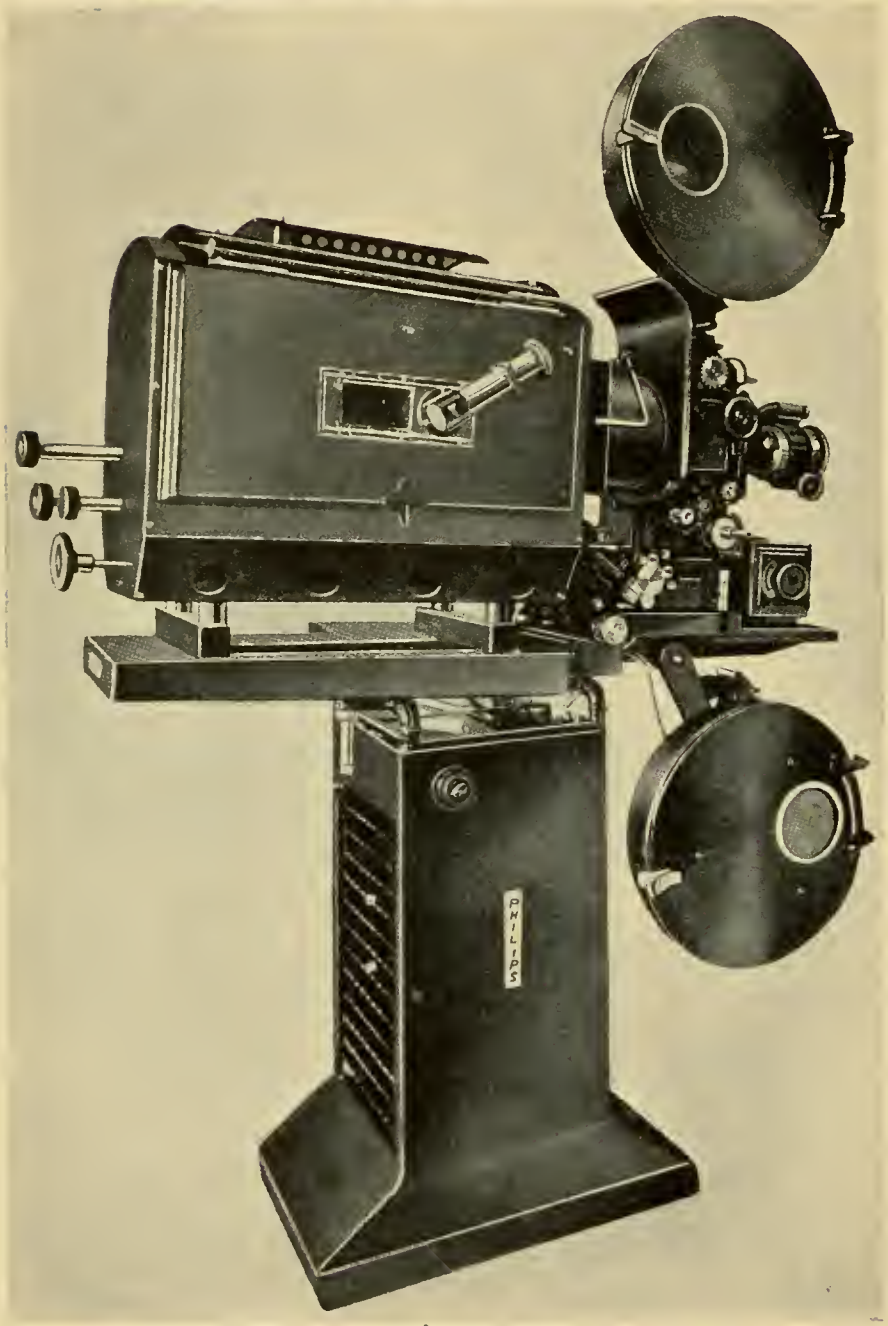

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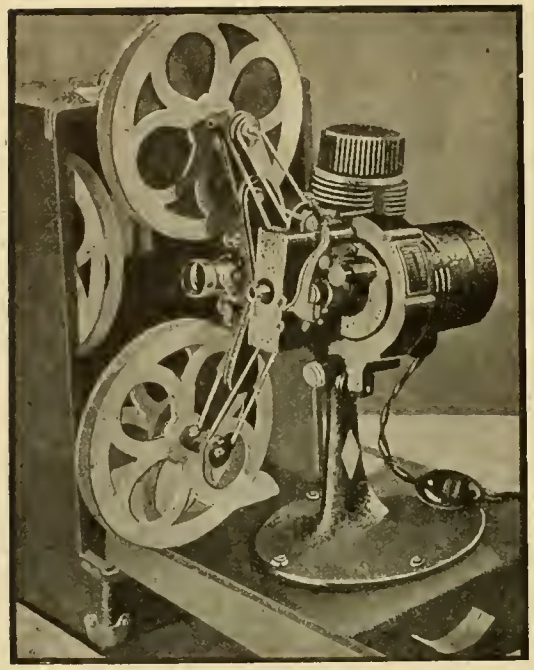

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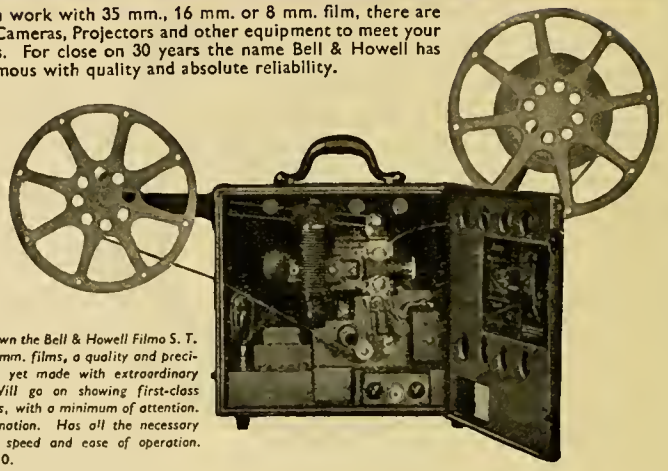

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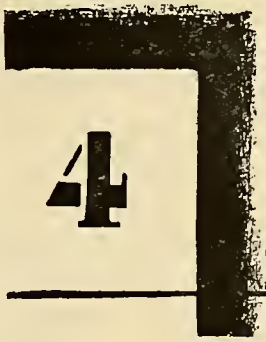

4 SPRING CRUISES

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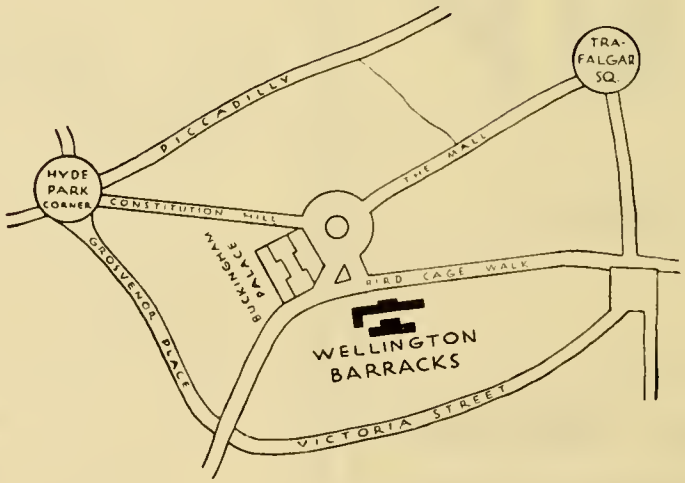

YOU CAN BE SURE OF SHELL

world FILM news
AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

SECOND NUMBER Editor H. N. FELD. Associate Editor NORMAN WILSON. MAY 1936

HITCHCOCK, THE MAN KORDA CANNOT SIGN

Says C. A. LEJEUNE

Alfred Hitchcock is Public Monument No. 1 of the British film industry. Visiting Americans demand to see him in the same breath with which they ask for St. Paul's Cathedral and the lawns at Oxford. They are always surprised—who wouldn't be? —with what they see.

Hitch is a vast mountain of a man in the late thirties, with snapping black eyes, a ruddy face, and a child's lower lip above a quantity of chins.

His nose is good, but you don't notice it. His hand is enormous, and engulfs yours when you shake it. He dresses mostly in black, and his face persistently wears an expression either sleekly malicious or faintly surprised.

Everybody likes Hitch. His heart is as large as his person. He is prodigiously generous, never forgets an old employee, and anyone can impose on him with a hard-luck story. When you eat with Hitch, you eat like a prince and drink like an emperor. He'll say, "What about a meal, kid?" and take you to the most refined and expensive restaurant in London. But he'll always go, if you'll let him, in his oldest clothes.

He has a tiny wife, who writes his scenarios, and a tiny, fairy-like daughter, who bobs an old-fashioned curtsey to you when you meet her. These two small persons rule his life.

Loves Melodrama

He loves music, mystery and melodrama. He likes to imagine all the people he knows in melodramatic situations. He gloats over the idea of an aeroplane dropping live bombs on the Aldershot Tattoo. Like the children in *The Brushwood Boy*, he "sets light to populous cities to see how they would burn."

On the set he's a sadist. He revels in spiritual de-bagging. Nothing delights him more than to take a film star with a good opinion of himself, work him until he sweats, and then publicly can the sequence. His language is fierce, and his humour rarely drawing-room. He respects nobody's feelings; but everybody respects him.

Hitch's genius is for draughtsmanship. He is an instinctive visualiser. His film scripts are minor works of art, every shot blocked on the margin of the page in rough design. When a script is finished, he loses interest in the picture. He would rather get on with the next job. The present one is already projected in his mind's eye.

When he talks to you, his broad, soft pencil sneaks out and sketches illustrations on the menu card or tablecloth. The underlining of his signature slips into a self-portrait, rudely revelatory. He can forge your signature in a moment, so that you wouldn't know it from your own.

He began his film career by designing titles—painting "Came the Dawn" in white letters on a black ground, or "One Week Later" in black letters on a white ground, with appropriate illustrative symbols. In twelve years he has made more good pictures than any other director in this country—and he looks like continuing to make them.

His favourite star is Jimmy Cagney, his favourite film *Eight Girls in a Boat*, and he is probably the only man left in England whom Korda wants, but can't persuade to sign on the dotted line.

HITCH by HITCH

POLICE USE CINE-CAMERA TO CONVICT SPEEDSTERS

The Chesterfield police are trying to obtain evidence against dangerous drivers by securing records on moving film.

They have mounted a 16-mm. camera in the front seat of one of their mobile cars. It is operated by a man sitting beside the driver, who shoots through the wind-screen of the car. When the hood of the car is up the camera is almost invisible.

The experiment was started in July last year, when films were used to convict street bookmakers. The pictures, screened in court, showed bets actually being received by the bookies.

Scotland Yard, when asked if they were doing anything along similar lines, said they had considered the idea but discarded it as impractical.

There certainly would appear to be many technical snags. If the police-car is travelling at high speed, the vibration would almost certainly reduce the picture to a blur. And who will cheek the camera speed? The most innocuous driving looks dangerous when the camera is turning slow!

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THE BRITISH FILM

Wardour Street From Within

By One of the TWO CHAIRMEN.

A puzzling commission for a first contribution to "W.F.N."

Rather reminiscent of those mysterious safaris which set out from Northumberland Avenue in the dusker hours, bound for "Chinatown and London's Underworld." Wardour Street, after all, is a one-way street. All the traffic moves in the same direction, towards the half-yearly dividend.

There is nothing very mysterious about Wardour Street from inside. All the mystery is imposed from outside. Nothing unless it be its myths. It is said to be vulgar, amoral, illiterate, otiose, ostentatious, arrogant. It is all of these things and none. Walk the Street on any day of the year and you will find these failings, and in plenty. But you will find, too, generosity, culture, sensibility, modesty, creativeness, aye, and a disturbing puritanism, to boot.

If an institution is to be known by an exact generality, then Wardour Street is to be known by its hard-headed, harder-hided devotion to work, an infinite capacity for taking pains—and kicks—getting ruthlessly on with the constant and ultimate job of making money. There is no commercial or industrial centre in Europe more ruthless in this objective. But Wardour Street, after all, is not a sanatorium. It exists for purely financial ends, not for the good of your health.

CONTRASTS

It has been said that the pavements of Wardour Street are the haven of chisellers and racketeers from five continents; that there one finds more criminal countenances than anywhere else in London, saving certain courts in Notting Dale and a street or two in de Beauvoir Town. There, however, you will see more Rolls Royces, and a smarter sheen on the chauffeur's cap than any in Berkeley Square. But then the Square is dormitory for more than one executive. (The Street has a weakness for opulent verbiage.) *There* is the romance of Wardour Street. You may start out selling fried fish, and end up with a flat in Mayfair. On the other hand, you may start in London with an apartment in Park Lane, and end up snatching small Haigs in the public bar.

But though you may forget the elementary days of bread and cheese and a bitter at the "Two Chairmen," and currently dally with a *filet mignon* in the Grill of Grills, you need never forsake that back-slapping, one-man patter act which, though it may slightly shudder the susceptibilities of the Marquis at the window table, registers you as a personality.

With its old-world charm, Wardour Street still retains a good fellow or two, who, though he may call you a flamboyant when he means a philanderer, asks you if you'll "poysson" as well as "zupp." But it has patricians who ride with the Quorn, and who will give a duffer a well-paid job because he still plays for his county. Among its Moguls are, a man who auctioned china at a seaside salon, another who once ran an old clothing store, a third who sold newspapers. Its lesser lights include a first-class club three-quarter, a county cricketer, a 'Varsity rowing blue, and a member of the Ocean Yacht Club.

Is there any street in Europe which smokes more cigars than Wardour Street? Between the "Duke of Wellington" and the "Canadian," the Corona or the Perla de Oceano is the cachet of authenticity. More than one salesman has been known to go luncheonless in order to flaunt that essential emblem. There is one noted personality who secretes dozens on his person with the brilliance of a prestidigitateur, and produces them to the initiated with equal polish.

Is there any community which can on Monday lean against a saloon-bar with plebeian ease, and on Tuesday play host at a Caviare d'Astrakhan and Pol Roger '98 occasion? Nowhere, from Kobe Quayside to Sunset Boulevard, does the two-timer and the side-issue man get away with what he gets away in Wardour Street. Nowhere does he persuade with such success High Society to grace his baptismal functions.

Vulgarity, ostentation? There are offices in Wardour Street where the chromium-plating and dressed leather would shame Half Moon Street, where mosaic tables in reception lobbies remind you of the Vatican, where the personal secretary wears Schiaparelli creations, and the boss sports a Lincoln Bennett hat.

STRANGER THAN FICTION

Amorality? Then I commend you the British Board of Film Censors, than whom there is no more righteous and highly principled body of ladies and gentlemen in captivity. It has been said that the only reason why no paper has ever published photographs of the B.B.F.C. personnel is that nobody would believe it.

But then nobody would believe the truth about Wardour Street. It would be too disillusioning. For truth, even in Wardour Street is a stranger to fiction.

Wardour Street from within?
I wouldn't dare!
You wouldn't believe it.
Nor would Wardour Street.

25,000 PEOPLE VISIT MOBILE NEWS CINEMA

Posters in the corridors of two L.N.E.R. trains, King's Cross-Leeds and Leeds-Edinburgh, offer film entertainment to passengers. The price of admission is no higher than ordinary news theatres—an hour to an hour and a quarter for a shilling.

The long and narrow van, taking its shape from that of the train, is reminiscent of the early nickelodeons. About 50 people can be seated, and the film is shown by back projection on to a small screen, 6 ft. × 7 ft.

The programme, consisting of Pathé newsreel items, one-reeler interest films, and comedy shorts, is changed every week.

An L.N.E.R. cinema official told *W.F.N.* that the travelling public is enthusiastic. 25,000 people have already visited the film shows since they started on May 27th last year. The best proof of success is that a regular public has been created.

The same official keeps a diary in which he enters the public's reaction to each programme. From this he has found "the perfect programme," a cartoon, a comedy, a newsreel and, particularly popular, a travel film.

Encouraged by success, the L.N.E.R. already contemplates building more mobile news cinemas.

What Opportunity is Given to Young Scenario Writers?

Max Schach of Capitol Films answers this—

In my opinion the question touches upon one of the important points—I should even like to say one of the weaknesses—from which the young British film industry is still suffering. It is not that there is a dearth in this country of young script writers, rich in ideas and the constructive faculty, but they often lack the "shooting script technique," which is the advantage, though not the monopoly, of Hollywood.

Capitol Films has drawn its practical conclusions from this fact; none of the American script writers whom we have brought over works without a British writer.

We have now three talented young Englishmen on our scenario staff, Ernest Betts, Roger d'Est Burford and Denis Waldock, and experience has shown that these gifted writers learn very quickly from their American colleagues. In a short time we shall, doubtless, raise a body of British scenario writers who, at present, in most cases lack nothing except encouragement.

There will, of course, always be exceptions; for instance, outstanding American script writers will always be necessary for any special type of subject, as everything that is outstanding must be sought by an aspiring film industry.

On the other hand, I am convinced that such outstanding personalities can also be found and developed within the younger generation of British script writers.

PIONEER NEWS-REEL THEATRE IS SHOPWINDOW FOR THE REALISTS

By ANDREW BROOM

The Gaumont British Picture Corporation decided in 1931 to change the name and policy of the Super Cinema, Charing Cross Road. A. W. Jarratt conceived the idea of a theatre devoted entirely to magazine films, and thus was launched the policy now associated with the Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road.

It opened on Monday, February 16th, 1931, with a programme consisting of a news-reel, magazine, cartoon and a two-reel interest. Almost immediately this new type of cinema entertainment attracted people with time to spare, as well as those interested in the cinema. Contact was quickly made with colleges, schools and educational bodies, and arrangements made for parties of students to view certain films during study hours. Thus the foundations were laid.

For a year the Gaumont-British Movietone News Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue and the Tatler were the two solitary theatres of their type in the British Isles. So successful was this new departure in film theatres that they were imitated. Before long, news theatres were opened in the West End, at the principal railway termini, and in the larger provincial towns.

Those responsible for the booking of the weekly programmes at the Tatler learned much from experience. They very soon realised that six or seven single reels of various subjects was the programme preferred. Towards the end of 1931, films produced by the E.M.B. were played, and it was noticed that the audience, especially the younger members, followed the technique of the Grierson Group very closely. Observations as to photography, cutting, editing and subject-matter were heard frequently, which proved conclusively that documentary film was being understood and appreciated.

Propaganda Resented

The Tatler was the first cinema to exhibit an all-Disney programme. Christmas, 1933, saw this departure from the original policy. Mrs. A. W. Jarratt suggested a complete programme of *Mickey Mouse* and *Silly Symphony* cartoons. The first Disney season was an unqualified success, and continued for several weeks. It attracted enormous crowds of young people who were visiting their first cinema.

A well-known film magazine introduced into the subject-matter some unobtrusive advertising. It was done with the utmost discretion, but it was detected, and there were complaints. Advertising films should not be included in a news-theatre programme. Another pitfall is propaganda. Patrons openly resent it. It is extraordinary how quickly people imagine they are listening to propaganda. Immediately a sequence about the U.S.S.R. flashes on the screen, it is the signal for exclamations, either for or against the Soviet Union.

The reception given *The March of Time* was most encouraging. The first issue of this virile news-reel created the greatest interest, and each subsequent issue continues to do so. There has been criticism as to the very definite American atmosphere of *The March of Time*, but this objection will be obviated as soon as English sequences are regularly included in each issue.

Those responsible for the booking of films are not finding the position difficult, because there is an ever-increasing supply of first-class non-fictional shorts. Such groups as the G.P.O. Film Unit, Gaumont-British Instructional, the Rotha Unit, and many other independent producers are all giving of their best. C. A. Lejeune, of the *Observer*, once remarked that the English interest films were the best in the world. Miss Lejeune never spoke a truer word.

Andrew Broom, manager of the Tatler Theatre since its inception.

Mr. Broom, together with A. W. Jarratt, has kept the Tatler programme of constant interest for five years.

The place where many film experiments have made their bow to the public.

CANADA DRAWS ON OLD RECORDS FOR MOST DRAMATIC PICTURE OF WAR

The most dramatic history of the war yet made has just come into the country, and from the least expected quarter. Canada, which is best known for its short picturesque films of Canadian scenery and sport, has made its second full-length feature.

The first was made some years ago by Bruce Bairnsfather in the studios owned by the Ontario Government. It was called, as might be expected, *The Better 'Ole*, but little was heard of it after production. It fell between the period of silence and sound, and was in fact a dull film.

This history of the war is a large-scale dramatisation of the war, built up mainly from the world's news-reels, and concentrating on the Canadian contribution. Directed by Frank Badgley, Canadian Government film-producer, it builds a spectacular and terrifying picture of mass marching and mass murder.

Columbia Pictures handled the film in America, and in Canada it had an astounding commercial success. Coming at a time when war is again in the public mind, and when a review of the Great War comes close to the general conscience, its circulation in this country should be equally interesting.

The film includes the principal battles of the War, drawing for its main material on actual battlefield records. Its massed reality comes nearer to fantasy and fairy tale than anything in *Things to Come*.

The capsizing of the *Blucher* at Jutland, with its hundreds of men slipping desperately over the turning hull and falling like flies to their death, is the high spot of the picture. It is easily the most striking thing the camera has ever recorded. With the mud and the marching, death by wire and gas and shrapnel and bomb, the superb chapters of this film build up to a tragedy so great that the inventive efforts of the studios seem pale in comparison.

MEETINGS AND ACQUAINTANCES

FLORA ROBSON, formerly co-lead with Robert Donat at the Festival Theatre, Cambridge, represents the contribution of the *avant-garde* stage to British screen-acting. She is to play Queen Elizabeth in the Korda-Bruckner film scheduled to take the floor at Denham in May. Pommer will produce.

Flora Robson cares more about who photographs her than who directs her. Still a little scared of the technical demands of movies, she expects sympathy from the camera department. Some skilful tests by Harold Rosson made her feel that her cameraman can make or break her.

Her inferiority-complex regarding her own rushes might well set an example to all honest directors.

THE BROTHERS WILHELM. Hans, the elder, has returned from Hollywood. He wants to script Margaret Kennedy's *Week End.*

Wolfgang, the younger, is trimming up another script for British production—this time from an original story.

Both believe that there are some film subjects outside the past, the future, the exotic, and the music-hall.

ADRIAN BRUNEL, celebrated director of English silents, has just completed a new text-book on film production, with an introduction by Alexander Korda. This "sequel" to his popular *Filmcraft* will be issued by George Newnes Ltd. this month.

Brunel is now recuperating after three years of making feature-length pictures at the rate of one every two months. He claims that he has learned much from the experience—particularly never to do it again.

CHARLES DUFF is a great authority on Spanish and Portuguese literature. His new book, *The Truth about Columbus,* bids fair to be regarded as the most accurate of the few honest works ever written about the great explorer.

A new light on Columbus' adventure in Spain is cast by the chapters dealing with the important part played therein by the Jews.

Negotiations for a film based on the book are in progress. The Jews may doubtless be relied upon to play another important part.

ANDRÉ GIRARD, French poster artist, is holding a successful exhibition of paintings in Paris.

Like Zero (whose poster ideas have been discussed in the first issue), Girard believes that the film poster serves no useful purpose. He thinks that the appeal of the printed poster, in general, is decreasing. He wants to see a single original canvas take the place of its ubiquitous copies. This idea he carried out in a series of immense oils of foreign cities for a "Hear the World" Marconi radio campaign. The original pictures, erected on the usual poster hoardings, caused a sensation in the streets of Paris. A cosmetic firm followed up with a "types of female beauty" series by Van Dongan.

LORD BERNERS engages in three different spheres of art; painting, literature and music. His works delight a chosen circle of London admirers.

In Paris the Vicomte de Noailles and the Comte de Beaumont have both turned producer. Their films are, in a sense, epoch-making since they include Cocteau's *Le Sang d'un Poète,* Man Ray's *Le Château du Dé,* and Bunuel's *L'âge d'Or.*

Why has Lord Berners not yet tackled the cinema? Will the aristocratic tradition prove stronger in Paris than London?

WALTHER RILLA, German stage and screen star, reports the completion in Berlin of *Autumn Melody.* Rilla is equally happy acting in German, French or English, and has played lead in *The Scarlet Pimpernel.*

On the Continent he has served the independent producers and the more high-brow film public.

JEAN GIONO, famous French writer, has at last seen the film versions of two of his most celebrated novels, *Angèle* and *Joffroy.* The latter has been shown to the London Film Society. Marcel Pagnol, playwright turned producer, made both films. The Giono-Pagnol collaboration did not last in spite of a box-office success rare in the French cinema to-day. Pagnol conceives of cinema as a steady succession of dialogue scenes: Giono expects bigger things of it.

Cavalcanti and Ruttmann both proposed collaborating with Giono before the Pagnol tie-up, but French producers were not interested.

Will Giono prove strong enough in future to dictate his own choice of partners to his producers?

Maurice Chevalier and Betty Stockfield in a scene from "The Beloved Vagabond," the forthcoming Toeplitz production, directed by Kurt Bernhardt.

MY FUTURE PLANS

By Victor Saville

I am working as a producer within the Denham organisation, and as such have become an independent unit with certain films which I shall produce, and in some cases direct, for world release through London Films usual source, the United Artists. I hope to bring forward new directorial talent to help me in this programme, and because of my desire to encourage such talent, it will be necessary at first to direct myself, but I have hopes, with certain directors or near-directors, of making, eventually, no less than four pictures a year.

We have purchased the rights in *Storm in a Teacup,* Bruno Frank's play adapted by James Bridie, which will probably be the first picture of the new unit, starting some time in May or June. We have also purchased the Winifred Holtby novel, *South Riding,* of which I have great hopes. The other subject which we are working on is an adaptation from a sketch written many years ago, called *Gentlemen, the King!*" which is a military story, and which we are planning to do in Technicolor.

HAS RENÉ CLAIR FORGOTTEN?

asks André Bouxin

Abandoning for a while his legendary reserve, René Clair the other day donned his best clothes and, between Charles Laughton's superb moustache and the sardonic smile of Saint Denis, the director of the Compagnie des Quinze, he talked for thirty-five minutes before a brilliant Franco-English audience. The lecture hall of the Institut Français, which only holds 800 people, was forced to accommodate 1,000 listeners, who, unwilling to miss such a rare opportunity, had fought to get in.

René Clair used the opportunity to give vent to his feelings, his bitterness at having fought so long in vain.

Here are a few of his words:

"The public knows nothing of the cinema, and does not sufficiently realise the tremendous efforts of the artisans of the film and the possibilities of the cinema, duped as it constantly is by the crude publicity of the exploiters of the screen. The cinema of to-day borrows from the stage, from the novel, from the plastic arts, and consequently it cannot be said to be itself an art. For my part, I should like to be able to say that it is an art, and nothing but an art. But the cinema is, above all, a means of expression, which in spite of the television of to-morrow, will go down to history as the first means of expression destined for the masses.

A Sigh for Silent Films

"Since 1908 the cinema has stopped seeking its own direction, and has been subordinated to the producers, who being, above all, business men, inflicted on the public a host of artistic pretensions.

"The spoken word only emphasised this servitude, and destroyed that creative spirit which it had somehow kept alive by condemning it to imitation.

"As far as I am concerned, I have long since made up my mind: I can only regret the happy times of the silent films, which shrouded productions in an atmosphere of poetry which speech has destroyed.

"As for the theatre, towards which I am not in the least hostile, I shall be very forthright.

"The stage and film have nothing to gain by being intermingled. The stage actor, by repeating his part every night, improves it constantly. The film actor, on the other hand, must in a few minutes create an image which is reproduced everywhere, and will never be obliterated. The film actor owes more to spontaneity than to experience.

"To-day the cinema clings desperately to moth-eaten dogmas. A beginner in the studio could not start as Charlie Chaplin did in the olden days, for the screen of to-day represents the most perfect defence organisation against the very thing which might revive it.

"Charlie Chaplin winds up a career of genius in an anachronistic way. The film of yesterday was hampered in its development. The film of to-day leaves no mark on the white screen.

"The field is clear for the film of to-morrow."

Well, this time René Clair has spoken, but he has said too much or not enough. He has said too much because he spoke before a public which had come to see him, which was expecting anything; anything but this pessimism, this mood of despair. That public was not likely, in fact, to realise the significance of those invectives.

Failing Brilliantly

My dear René Clair, we are all agreed that the cinema has too long been a victim of the profiteers, and production in general is far from being what it should. But when I saw you the first time, you remember, it was at your first showing of 14 *juillet*. I told you then quite frankly my surprise at your first failure. I tried to find excuses, and you said to me just as you said to-day: "It is the fault of the producers, who are only interested in the financial returns."

You wanted to leave Tobis to go to America, there to find virgin soil to develop your art in an atmosphere of freedom.

Then after a long silence I found you again in your *Dernier Milliardaire*. I was happy to see the man who made *l'Entracte*, but alas, your plot was the story of the "*salon des échanges*," played out two years too late.

I waited for a victorious reappearance. You produced *The Ghost Goes West*. In my opinion, this, too, is bad.

Well, it is true, no doubt, producers are exploiters, oppressors, and a misinformed public paralyses production. But you are certainly not blameless either.

The cinema is dead you say! Well, it is not true. There are men who have been watching, and are watching still, men working in the dark, fighting, sometimes victoriously, sometimes to fail like yourself.

You, no doubt, are failing brilliantly, for with your gifted work you have localised the public's attention. But your fault is that you fight alone.

I understand your love of solitude, your contempt for snobs and receptions. But what about your comrades? Your comrades of *Paris qui Dort*, of *l'Entracte*, of the happy days of Studio 28. They are here, struggling every day against the same difficulties that you are encountering.

Why not join them, René Clair? In your absence those few have been reinforced by many young men who will make their mark to-morrow. Form a united front against big business! Don't fight alone, for you will never succeed, and you will thereby deprive the screen of one of its best men. You *must* do it, for you still have the talent.

HEARST CRUSADES AGAINST MAE WEST

Copyright Vicky Publications.

Twenty-eight newspapers in America, under the control of William Randolph Hearst, are conducting a crusade against Mae West.

Since her first film, *Night After Night*, in 1932, she has appeared in several films, including *I'm No Angel*, *Goin' to Town*, and now *Klondike Annie*, which was released on Washington's birthday.

The Hearst press are not accepting advertisements for the film, but the over-emphasis of their attitude is stimulating box-office activity and providing Paramount with free publicity.

RADIO AND TELEVISION

NEW PLAYS PLANNED; POETRY A FEATURE

On May 1st the B.B.C. will broadcast D. G. Bridson's specially-written programme, "May Day in England."

The B.B.C. Drama Department's future plans include original radio plays by T. S. Eliot, Denis Johnston and other celebrated writers.

In this article Grace Wyndham Goldie, broadcast drama critic to *The Listener*, discusses Bridson's contributions to the feature-programme. In future issues of *W.F.N.* she will report on important developments in radio drama.

• • •

Mr. Bridson is well worth watching. He is one of the most successful experimentalists now writing for broadcasting. The particular quality of his work, as his recent historical broadcast, "The March of the Forty-five" showed, is a fine free use of verse in conjunction with music and sound effects to produce feature programmes which are charged with emotion and the atmosphere of a period.

He uses verse and language which has style and beauty not because they are "literary," but because they are useful.

A mood carefully engendered in the listener by music and sound effects will quickly be killed by the flatness of ordinary realistic prose of the kind which dominates the theatre and the cinema. You can say the same thing in verse and resounding prose, your own or anybody else's, and maintain the mood. This Mr. Bridson does with an air of happy and careless gaiety; and poetry becomes once more a living thing, necessary to our entertainment, a part of our daily lives.

Here, under the auspices of the B.B.C., is quietly going on a literary revolution. Another sign of it is the recent announcement that T. S. Eliot, Denis Johnston and other dramatists of their calibre are to write plays specially for the microphone. In broadcast drama, poets and stylists seem likely to come once more into their own.

ACE ADAPTER SCORES AGAIN— RADIO DRAMA FROM PARIS

Jean Variot's eagerly-awaited adaptations of "Henry VIII" and "Macbeth" have been broadcast from Radio-Paris recently.

Variot, French author and theatrical producer, has specialised for several years in adapting the works of great authors for the microphone. His broadcasts have included adaptations of Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller, Byron and Gogol. He has also produced and made gramophone records of Molière's "Le Médecin Malgré Lui" and "Hamlet." His play, "La Mauvaise Conduite" was given in London, in 1932, by the celebrated Compagnie des Quinze.

Variot does not believe that original broadcast plays have much value. He holds that French radio playwrights, exalted by theoretical considerations of "sound-technique," have concentrated their energies on matters of no importance, such as accurate reproduction of crowd-noises and niceties of balance between music and speech.

While admitting that these efforts often achieve a passing success on the air, Variot complains that they hold no lasting public interest. People do not want to know, he claims, whether or not a play has been originally conceived in terms of radio; what they do want is to hear the works of great accepted authors.

So Variot has set himself the task of bringing the masterpieces of European literature to the microphone in terms of specially prepared adaptations. By recording these radio productions he hopes to build up a library widely representative of great European plays.

Jean Bérard, head of the Compagnie Française du Gramophone, has hitherto been the chief sponsor of Variot and other French artists in sound. His own recordings include a sensational disc of a mad woman telling her life-story, made in the mental hospital of Sainte Anne, Paris.

But Bérard is now to leave the gramophone world for films. His first film is to be the story of Paderewski's political life in Poland. After that he plans a series of magazine films about the work of other composers and playwrights.

Gramophone a Separate Medium

During his career as a chief of the French gramophone industry, Bérard did great things for modern music in France. He sponsored many experimental recordings and ensured public knowledge of the work of young composers.

Bérard believes that the 10-inch width of a small record is not an arbitrary measurement. That width, he says, can comfortably hold an average song, and in so doing fulfils a definite modern need. He maintains that gramophone recording must be regarded as a separate medium from broadcasting, since a recorded musical work will eventually be considered as a series of entities, each of so many minutes' duration.

In addition to his disc of the Hôpital Sainte Anne, Bérard has recorded a history of music in terms of progressive musical quotations, and a series of dramatised children's fairy tales.

Wireless Concerts lose Edward Clarke

News comes that Edward Clarke has left the B.B.C. The bold scope and high standard of the Contemporary Concerts have been largely due to his perseverance. Both listeners and the B.B.C. music department will regret his going.

The most important music broadcasts announced for May are Alban Berg's violin concerto, completed shortly before his death last year, and Vladimir Vogel's *Wagadu*, a work for chorus and small orchestra. The Berg is scheduled for May 1st, and the Vogel for May 16th. The month's music will also include relays from Covent Garden opera house. The season opens on April 27th with *Die Meistersinger*. This will be broadcast in its entirety, a procedure almost unprecedented for the B.B.C.

The Berg concerto will be played by Krasner and conducted by Anton von Webern, himself a composer and close friend of Berg during his lifetime. Von Webern's series of Workers' Concerts in Vienna drew crowded houses, and won him wide fame as a conductor.

Vladimir Vogel, Russian composer living in Switzerland, is best known for his fine *Storm March* for brass, and for two rhythmic studies for orchestra. The choral writing of *Wagadu* is said to be difficult to a degree of virtuosity.

It is a pity that no room has been found for novelties in this season's opera. Practical difficulties may bar the production of Berg's *Wozzeck*, but means surely exist for the staging of Shostakovitch's *Lady Macbeth*. The broadcast of this work in March stirred up interest and discussion in many musical quarters. Why should Weinberger's delightful *Schwanda* be dropped when, with a little nursing, it might deservedly become a popular favourite?

Hollywood Radio Fight but Lolly no like it

Battle for picture names to appear on radio programmes is at its height here. Bing Crosby's Kraft Cheese hour, Al Jolson's Shell Chateau, Mary Pickford's United Ice hour, Louella Parson's Campbell's Soup airing and the Lux programme are the competitors for picture personalities.

Miss Parsons is reported not liking the idea of Miss Pickford asking screen personalities and notables to appear on the United Ice Industries broadcast over Columbia network.

Lolly has been having a cinch on getting big personalities and studio co-operation on her programme, for which she gets around 1,500 dollars an etherisation, and which is a three-way split proposition with her employers. Space reimbursement for those who comply is the pay-off in the local Hearst papers and, of course, the Universal Service, for which she writes and syndicates her column.

When Miss Pickford started on the Ice etherisation, matters came to a head when Lolly is said to have conveyed word to Pickford-Lasky organisation that if Miss Pickford did not stop intruding on her radio idea there would be no publicity in her columns for the pictures of the company, or people working for them.

Lolly also is not pleased with Ginger Rogers going on a Pick-air programme and turning her down. Unless Miss Rogers comes through, it is said, she is also in the Parsons' "dog-house." Two others whom Miss Parsons is not so keen about for refusing to do a little soup-ethering are Fred Astaire and Frederic March. (*Variety*).

JOHN LOGIE BAIRD

Gives Story of his Struggles for Television

In a quiet avenue of South London stands a large house with an atmosphere of nineteenth-century propriety. Here lives John Logie Baird, inventor of television; and here Baird told me how he had spent his life striving to harness wireless waves for the transmission of pictures.

Leaving Glasgow University in 1914, he came to London with the idea of television already firmly fixed in his head. He had barely enough money to live on, and none to buy experimental equipment. "I moved around from boarding-house to boarding-house—bed and breakfast, 35s.; full board, Sundays," he explained.

"My apparatus moved around with me in a brown-paper parcel under my arm. I worked in my bedroom with a lot of old soap-boxes and things. Meantime, I had to keep myself from starving by inventing things and trying to get them marketed.

"Among the inventions were a non-corrosive glass razor and a system for wearing tyres on your boots to save energy in walking. The Baird glass razor ripped my face open at the first stroke, and as for the Baird tyred boots—one of the inner tubes burst in High Holborn while I was testing them."

In 1922, after a serious breakdown in health, Baird moved to Hastings, and in another boarding-house set up his ever-accumulating apparatus. Its chief ingredients were soap-boxes, cardboard, darning-needles, torch batteries and second-hand electric motors. Early in 1924, for the hundredth time, the old motors whirred, the darning-needles shook, the soap-boxes vibrated—and Baird saw the image of his own hand for the first time. "It's commonplace now," he said, "but I can tell you it made me jump then."

By every means in his power, Baird sought money to develop his invention. He demonstrated his apparatus to doctors, writers, company promoters; he circularised people right and left. Finally, with the help of his family, a public company was formed, and Baird was able to buy equipment and gather round him a group of assistants. Those assistants are now the senior officials and research-workers of Baird Television Ltd.

In a discussion of the relation of film technique to television, Baird said: "At present television cannot offer the film director much new scope since it is largely dependent on the use of film. But the television camera has certain advantages over the movie camera. For instance, the image from the television camera can be faded in and out at will by twisting a knob. So that if there is more than one camera recording a scene, the director can mix from one camera to another and superimpose the images as he wants.

"At a television demonstration at the Coliseum a few years back we arranged for the person being televised to answer questions from the screen. Stribling, the boxer, was televised from our Long Acre studio, and his image appeared on the screen in the theatre. A microphone was placed in the auditorium, with a loud-speaker in the studio where Stribling was sitting. The audience fired questions at him, and he answered them. The method could be used to enliven political meetings of the future."

THEN AND NOW

By Clinton Baddeley

On March 6th, 1936, the *Daily Telegraph* television correspondent, reporting on the quality of the new B.B.C. television pictures, said: "The only important difference between them and the

pictures on an ordinary cinema screen was a slight flicker." Minute details, such as the writing on a card, were revealed. "Sitters in the glare of studio lights were remarkably clear and life-like" when the electron camera was used, and in panoramic views objects could be distinguished at a distance of five miles.

The full significance of these sentences must have been lost to those who were unaware of the changes both in transmission methods and reception results since the early 30-line television days. "Sitters in the glare of studio lights"—up to the closing-down of the 30-line transmissions from Broadcasting House in 1935, the main characteristic of television acting was that it was done not in glaring light but in Stygian darkness. The only illuminant was the brilliant flickering beam which was directed upon the performer, dazzling him to such an extent that he could with difficulty keep to the two or three positions necessary for the focus of the camera. It was an alarming business in those days.

The B.B.C.'s first television play was transmitted on July 14th, 1930. Unlike the early film directors, who delighted in the beginning in a little simple horse-play, the B.B.C. strangely selected to do Pirandello's obscure play, *The Man with a Flower in his Mouth*, which was rendered even more obscure by the manner of its presentation and the drab and jigging image which the camera reproduced. Very often, as with the old films, the picture slipped. Little alternation of scene was possible, and the producer was driven to vary the picture by introducing long close-ups of the actors' hands, a spectacle not particularly entertaining.

The following five years saw big advances. Dancing, small revues, pantomimes, Zoo animals were all successfully transmitted. But when transmissions ceased in 1935 the picture was still confined and, except in close-up, dark. In short, we could not read the writing on a card, nor distinguish objects five miles away.

R.C.A. Enters Television Field

Further information is now available regarding American television projects mentioned in last month's *W.F.N.*

R.C.A. are building a television studio in the National Broadcasting Company's station in Radio City, New York. This studio will be linked with an experimental transmitter now under construction in the Empire State Building. First transmissions are expected in April or May, when R.C.A. test receivers will tour New York recording signal strengths and other technical data.

R.C.A. emphasise that the building of this experimental station does not mean that a regular American television service is at hand. Their 1935 annual report states: "It will be necessary to co-ordinate a number of important elements before television on a regular basis of service can be established. These are the essential pioneering stages in the development of an art in which considerable expenditures must be made for research before returns can be expected. As the work goes on, it may be necessary to return to the laboratory from time to time to seek the solution to practical problems encountered in the field."

R. R. Beal, acting chairman of R.C.A.'s Television Committee, has denied that the Corporation contemplates marketing television receivers in the near future. No further information is divulged regarding future television projects, and it is considered that R.C.A.'s principal interests in radio and film equipment must necessarily make their entry into the television field a matter of delicacy.

RADIO—THE PROBLEM OF THE AUDIENCE

To those who remember—or continue—the discovery of the film medium, the discovery of the laws of television must appear an equally exciting prospect. But the history of film is likely to be repeated. Very seldom have the laws of film been discovered out of the zeal for exploration. As with Marco Polo, Columbus and the others, discoveries have been made as by-products of more material adventures.

In the excitement of the first primitive period of film, there was emphasis on its power of trickery and its power of movement. An artist like Melies loved these things for themselves; but they were also suited to the novelty atmosphere of the nickelodeons and the first audiences. Film drama did not come in response to the artist's desire to exploit the capacity of film for size and sweep. It came from a desire to exploit the publicity value of "famous players" like Bernhardt.

The promoter leads with his eye on the audience; the artist follows. It was always the custom of kings to take clerks on their travels; and the method still obtains. But it is not the clerks who dictate the line of march; they merely make the best of a compulsory journey. So they took slapstick out of cinema vaudeville, epic out of wild western, documentary out of the limited film finance of propaganda, and montage out of (*a*) Russia's desire to shout international messages, and (*b*) Russia's shortage of film stock.

Much the same thing has happened in broadcasting, except that the clerks have not been so quick to exploit their opportunities. The exercise of radio has been determined exclusively by the desire to fulfil audience services. Music, public information, education, light entertainment have been given because large masses of the people wanted them. But they have been given straight, without any historic attempt on the part of the artist to convert or enliven them on their mechanised journey to the audience.

Two facts emerge. The first is that it is useless for the artist to attempt a discovery of television without reference to audience demands. He will quite definitely not be permitted across the frontier. The second fact is that the tradition of radio suggests a more slavish service of the audience than the tradition of cinema—and a minimum of discovery, unless a real effort is made to wake the creative conscience of the B.B.C.

To any such criticism the B.B.C. replies that it must be simple: it must think of its millions. We can answer that, and shortly. The necessary simplicity and the necessary millions of cinema have not prevented Chaplin, Cruze, Griffith and Pudovkin. More radically we answer: Who are these millions the B.B.C. people are always talking about? There is vanity, and nonsense, in the conception.

The B.B.C. has a monopoly of air time, and this it distributes sensibly to a hundred different audiences: some directly educational, some informational, some entertaining, some in the highest sense æsthetic. It has services for majority audiences, but it has also services which are either minority or sectional: to farmers, seamen, schoolchildren, specialists in music, etc. Not every B.B.C. audience is a majority audience; not every listening mood is a majority mood.

No consideration of radio psychology—and of television psychology to come—can avoid these issues. There will be consideration of minority appeals as well as majority ones. Creative achievement as well as simple report will be expected of it. Too many people are now instructed in visual image to allow the art of television—like the art of microphone—to be trifled with.

These things granted, there must continue to be vast differences between the attitude to radio and the attitude to film. Television will reflect them. *(To be continued.)*

THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

M. Sayle Taylor, High Priest of U.S. radio stars. He operates a nation-wide confession service, and receives 2,000 confessions a day.

More Competition in Television

It is announced that a new private company, Scophony Ltd., has been formed to take over television patents and processes from a previous company of the same name. The capital is £140,000 in £1 shares.

Scophony Ltd. control the television inventions of G. W. Walton, a Lancashire engineer. The patents include a mechanical scanning system designed to give projected television pictures of the size of a home-movie screen. The company is reported as being about to embark on the manufacture of high-definition television receivers.

On the board are Sir Maurice Bonham Carter, W. S. Verrells, chairman of E. K. Cole Ltd. (makers of Ecko radio sets), and Oscar Deutsch, governing director of Odeon Theatres Ltd.

GOOD WORK ON THE NORTH REGIONAL

George Audit writes:

I think you were wise to print that interview with Gilliam, because it is obviously important to maintain contact with him, and I believe he can be influenced in the right direction. But I don't think much of him as an artist. His stuff has no *shape*.

There is only one creative combination in that side of broadcasting, and London hardly knows of it at all. I mean Harding and Bridson of the North Region. They produced the "45" programme—one of the most interesting historical dramas ever written for broadcasting. Bridson is exceptionally talented, and some of the stuff he puts out from Manchester would lift your ears up.

Perhaps it is just as well that some of the London officials' sets do not get that station very easily.

Bridson and Harding have worked out an interesting technique around the character of "Harry Hopeful"—an unemployed Lancashire lad. "Harry" is the focussing point of many of their actuality programmes. They believe that the microphone ear is too cold and dispassionate a witness of the material presented.

Listeners require a presence to represent themselves in documentary programmes—a sort of homely Ariel who will suggest their own reactions.

Bridson's programme on "May-Day in England," which was broadcast from the North Region two years ago, is being put out on the National wavelength on May 1st this year. I remember the shock of surprise on hearing it the first time; it was, I believe, Bridson's first appearance in radio.

The programme outlines the celebrations of May-Day in England from the fourteenth century. The scenes are almost all described by quotations from contemporary observers. Chaucer; the Italian ambassador to the court of Henry VIII, who witnesses a 'prentices' revolt on May-Day; Bishop Latimer, locked out of church on May-Day because the parishioners have all gone off to the woods; the Puritans who banish the maypole, and Pepys who sees it return.

With the coming of the Industrial Age, the yearly record of strikes and wage struggles is punctuated by verses of "I'm to be Queen of the May, Mother." The story catches us up with the declaration of the General Strike on May 1st, 1926, while a bemused yokel dreams he is still living in a rustic age.

"May-Day in England" is a proper use of the documentary method. Such a theme can command the whole period of English literature, and Bridson makes full use of its rich material.

"Lonesome Pine"—Hollywood Dusts off Adjectives

News from America suggests that Walter Wanger's "Trail of the Lonesome Pine" has taken the place that "Becky Sharp" was meant to fill in the history of cinema. "Hollywood dusts off adjectives as trade press critics write raves on 'Trail' " is how its delighted distributors describe the first press reaction. All newspaper critics seem to have joined in agreeing that colour has at last arrived.

"Lonesome Pine" was directed by Henry Hathaway, with Sylvia Sidney as June Tolliver. Story is from the John Fox classic drama of life in the Kentucky mountains. "It is not just another colour picture" says one critic. " 'Lonesome Pine' is planned colour." No details, however, of what is meant by planned colour are added. "Hot or cold, it's a hit" is as far as American critics will venture into æsthetic. More definite is the information that the major American companies have decided, as a result, to go into production with outdoor dramas in colour.

Alex. Strasser writes:

The colour film is on its way. Whether it will supplant the black-white film completely, as the talkie superseded the silent film, will depend upon box-office reaction. Nothing more can be said about it in the present stage of development. The picture one might feel inclined to sketch is utterly distorted by the fact that, to-day, colour brings a new scale of costs. Colour, in addition, must become for the film-producer a medium of the same technical perfection and practicability as black-and-white. The director must be in a position to think and create in colour. He must be able to realise his ideas to the fullest extent. It must aid creation; it must not hamper it.

Very likely we must still wait for some time until "utterly beautiful colour" has become plainly and simply and practically "Colour."

Dr. Kalmus writes:

"The production of the film has given three important pointers to the industry: first, it was made to a time-schedule no longer than that required for a corresponding film in black-and-white; second, the colour-printing took only two days longer than black-and-white printing, the extra time being chiefly devoted to colour balancing; third, colour can now be reproduced in any shade of intensity."

Dr. Kalmus claims that colour need no longer be regarded as an extravagant burden on production expenses, and that the industry must now face the studio problems involved in its use. Set-decoration, make-up and lighting are, he thinks, the three production departments which will require re-organisation to meet the demands of colour photography.

GASPARCOLOR EXPERTS AT WORK

Below, Len Lye, the brilliant Australian colourist, studies a model while Humphrey Jennings (right) production supervisor, chooses a location.

Gasparcolor's latest film "The Birth of the Robot" is reviewed on page 25.

ASQUITH TO DIRECT COLOUR FILM

Arrangements have been made for working in Great Britain, under the name "Opticolor," the well-known French "Francita" Colour Process. The method is three-colour additive. That is to say, the film itself is black-and-white, and each frame contains three reduced-size pictures arranged *en échelon*. These are produced, of course, by means of a special three-element camera lens, each element taking through an appropriate colour-filter.

For projection, a similar lens-assembly is needed in place of the usual projection lens. It is proposed to hire out the projection lenses along with the films. Of course, the advantage of this type of colour-process is that it involves no extra expense in the manufacture and processing of the film, whereas in subtractive and mosaic-additive processes each reel has a formidable monetary value. Moreover, an indefinite number of identical prints can be secured.

Mr. Vell, who is at present staying in this country to supervise operations, is himself a cameraman who has been decorated for his services to photography by the French Government.

He spoke with enthusiasm of the future of the process, and of the great strides which it has already made in France. Last year a film was made reproducing a hundred of the pictures in the great Italian Art Exhibition at Paris, and M. Echolier, the curator of the Louvre, and organiser of the exhibition, consented to supply the commentary. Surgical films have also been made, and numerous scenic films, one of which includes the famous stained-glass windows at Chartres. *Jeunes Filles à Marier*, a full-length film entirely in colour, ran for three months at the Aubert Palace in Paris, and made a very favourable impression. Three hundred cinemas in France are now equipped for the process.

The production company which is being formed in this country will begin with a full-length drama, to be directed by Anthony Asquith. The idea is to choose some distinctively English subject and to make no special feature of colour-effects, but to treat colour-photography as something normal and usual. An all-colour news-reel service will also be started, and the production of colour cartoons will receive attention.

BEST CRITICISM OF THE MONTH

VON STERNBERG—HIS DEVELOPMENT ANALYSED

Meyer Levin writes in "Esquire":

Last year Mr. Von Sternberg came along with "The Scarlet Empress," which was completed just after a British film on the same subject, "Catherine the Great," had been released.

It is pertinent to the understanding of Von Sternberg's treatment of "Crime and Punishment" to remember that he was booed all over the lots for his over-embroidery of the screen when "Scarlet Empress" was shown. He sacrificed story, action, characterisation, actors, to a passion for ornate atmospheric composition. In comparison, "Catherine the Great" was a direct, speedy picturisation of the same theme, built around a virtuoso performance by Elisabeth Bergner.

Now, Mr. Von Sternberg seems to have taken to heart the criticism of his lavishly subtle technique. He has literally torn away the veils through which he loved to film the faces of his actors.

From Sternberg's "Crime and Punishment"

The only trouble is that Mr. Von Sternberg learned his lesson too well, and chose the wrong vehicle.

Curiously enough, the circumstances of the last comparison are repeated. Again, the scene is Russia. Again, Mr. Von Sternberg had the advantage of being able to view a completed foreign product before finishing his own work.

But from the way Von Sternberg went at it, his name might have been plain Joe Stern again. And I would trust a Joe Stern before a Joseph Von Sternberg.

The story, in brutal simplicity, is of a brilliant student of crime who, on graduating from the university, finds himself broke. His sister is about to marry for money. "Money! Money! Money!" his needs scream on every side. So he murders and robs a pawnbroker. The rest is a man-hunt.

Granted that Joe Stern's picture is addressed to the sub-literary mass audience which might have an idea of Dickens, but would be unlikely to have an idea of Dostoevsky, he has an æsthetic right to adapt rather than translate *Crime and Punishment*. He starts out by saying "this might happen any time, anywhere." He presents his characters in present-day business suits instead of in the frock coats and high hats worn by Russian students of the period of the novel. By showing a Russian newspaper in one scene, and by other minor touches, he conveys the idea that this has a Russian background, but the emphasis on time and place is skilfully reduced.

So far, so good.

Josef von Sternberg

For the sake of simplicity, then, Joe Stern omits the murder of the innocent sister. No philosophic complications, no atmospheric hair-splitting. This is a story of a man who needs money, kills someone to get it, and is finally caught by the cops.

Well, all right. But, so is *Show Them No Mercy*, so is *Mary Burns, Fugitive*, to cite some of the more excellent treatments of the recent versions of this most prolifically treated of themes. Joe Stern has simplified himself right down to the class of the Hollywood crime story. The only thing that distinguishes his film is the fact that the criminal is an intellectual instead of a mug.

Dostoevsky's novel is so rich that it would, of course, be impossible to simplify all value out of the story. The outline itself, as I remarked last month, is the perfect cops-and-robber scenario, and the chunks of action that Joe Stern has retained out of this outline serve nobly. But with the over-simplification of the psychological factors, the film tosses away its chances of distinction.

* * *

My preference is, naturally, the French film. But granting every premise of simplification that Joe Stern took, and looking at the result in the light of what he tried to do, his *Crime and Punishment* is a healthier and more successful film than the products of his atmospheric era.

From Chenal's "Crime et Chatiment"

Crime et Chatîment

Graham Greene in the "Spectator"

This is a more than usually intelligent film, and what of the novel's theme *can* be converted into visual terms has been converted. Raskolnikov's unbalanced pride is well suggested: in the mockery of a hat, in his crazy isolation as he makes his way through the friendly evening crowds to the scene of his crime; and of his sensitive conscience you can have no doubt watching M. Pierre Blanchar's hollow, handsome, haunted features.

But after all there is more to Dostoievsky's story than a case of conscience; Raskolnikov is a more subtle figure than Eugene Aram and a more general one. The director has not met his first difficulty: the fact that the book is written from inside Raskolnikov's brain.

M. Chenal's camera takes its stand on the outside, the world's side. It would have been far better to have dropped the realistic approach altogether, to have battered the real theme into us with soliloquies, with aerial voices, with dream imagery, with every kind of super-realist trick.

We are disappointed

That the late Wesley Hill, the original Gabriel of *Green Pastures*, will not shout "Gang way for the Lord God Jehovah" in the Warner Bros. film version.

That the Ministry of Health leaves it to the Gas, Light and Coke Co. and Cadbury's Chocolates to finance the health and housing propaganda we expect from it.

That the little Bergner's illness should be able to cause so much disaster.

That the Bali-Bali moonshine should make Chaplin talk idiotically of abandoning Charlie.

That Mélies, easily the most brilliant director of the early films recently revived, should not have been present to share the acclamation.

H. G. WELLS

Answers his Critics

Graham Greene's criticism of "Things to Come" in our last issue is answered by Wells himself in the current issue of "March of Time."

His answer is that, however one may react to the film treatment, "Things to Come" does at least—and unlike most films—raise an issue of great public importance.

"You see, to the end of time, the principal appeal of the film will be to love laughter and personal adventure. But, although that is the substance, and will remain the substance, of most films, it does not exhaust all the possibilities of interest in the world.

"At the present time there are a great many general interests which oppress men's minds and excite and interest them. There is the onset of war, there is the increase of power, there is the change of scale and the change of conditions in the world; and in our film we have been trying, without any propaganda, or pretensions, or preachment of any sort, to work out some of these immense possibilities that appeal, we think, to every man. We are attempting here the film of imaginative possibility."

FILMS THAT CHANGE THEIR NAMES

by ALAN WEIR (Leeds Mercury)

British film producers are not so prone to altering as are the Americans, who are said to alter about half of their titles between buying a story and releasing the finished film to the public.

Sometimes changes are made for reasons beyond the producer's control, as when the censor refuses to pass a title. A recent example is *Dawn of Life*, which was made about four years ago and shown in America under the title, *Life Begins*. It was sent to England as *The Way of Life*. Under that title and in its original form, the film could not get past the censor. Extensive cuts were made, and the title was changed to *Dawn of Life*, and the censor was satisfied.

Main Street, Sinclair Lewis's most famous novel, is being given to American film-goers as *I Married a Doctor*. It may still reach England as *Main Street*.

Paul Muni's *The Story of Louis Pasteur* was first publicised in America as *Enemy of Man*. It was privately shown as *Death Fighter*, and then it reverted to *The Story of Louis Pasteur*.

It Happened in Hollywood was submitted to several changes, including *Two Faces* and *Another Face*. The Bette Davis film, *Men on her Mind*, was variously called *The Maltese Falcon* (which had been used on a previous film), *The Girl from Tenth Avenue*, *Money Man* and *The Man with the Black Hat*.

Two men wrote a story entitled *Money Brides*. The studio changed it to *Lover, Come Back to Me*, and sent out the necessary publicity. As soon as shooting began, they renamed it *Gallagher*. It was released as *Platinum Blonde*.

Marlene Dietrich started work some time ago on a new film announced as *Desire*. Recently the title was changed in U.S.A. to *Invitation to Happiness*.

Mae West, who always has title-trouble, hesitated over *Klondike Lou*, *Klondike Doll* and *Klondike Annie* before settling on the last name for her latest film.

"BAD BLOOD" into "TOP GEAR"

Of British films, Anna Neagle's *Limelight* had several names, including *The Street Singer*; a film produced as *Bad Blood*, with John Mills and Lili Palmer, is now announced to be *Top Gear*; *The King's Pyjamas* (in which Clive Brook and Helen Vinson are starring) has been altered to *Love in Exile*; and *Three on a Honeymoon* has become *Where's Sally*?

If you cannot trace any of these films to the cinemas, don't blame me. Blame the title-changers.

CANTOR and LLOYD

Window-Dressers in Comedy

There are two ways of dressing a shop window. Either you may put into it everything you can think of, and thus catch the public eye by sheer quantity and variety, or else, more subtly, you may place in the centre of it just one solitary hat or tooth-brush, or whatever it may be, and leave it at that. Both methods produce results.

In Eddie Cantor's comedies, United Artists and Mr. Goldwyn pin their faith to the first of these two styles. They believe in making a splash. On the principle of the old riddle, they call to mind what they first thought of in earlier comedies, double it, add a little something the others hadn't got, and finish off with that smooth polish which only Hollywood can apply.

Almost one can imagine the conference which must have preceded their latest effort, *Strike Me Pink*. A list would have been drawn up of the different tastes which had to be catered for.

One by one they would be ticked off. First the tired business man (a tick—Gorgeous Goldwyn Girls in generous proportions), then tap-dancing enthusiasts (another tick—the Astaire-Rogers combination has much to answer for), the "I want my money's worth" school (another tick—elaborate chase on expensive scenic railway set), sentiment (why ask?), and even the mere slapstick and Cantor fans are not forgotten.

United Artists know, if one may coin a phrase, the questions and they have the answers.

Harold Lloyd goes about his business in a different way, but if the critical hat is to be raised, it must be to the battling milkman and his manager. Every great comedian of the screen has entered the ring at one time or another in his career. To a man they have got entangled in the ropes; almost to a man they have been funny about it.

Harold Lloyd is no exception. His fight in the closing scenes of *The Milky Way* may not be so hair-raising as Eddie Cantor's chase on the giant switch-back, but it is every bit as funny.

Very wisely, Harold Lloyd does not attempt too much himself. Throughout he is willing to let others in the cast have their fair share of the limelight, and he is most ably supported by Adolphe Menjou and Veree Teasdale, to say nothing of some sparkling dialogue. Miss Teasdale's wisecracks come over as fast as the milkman's punches, but with more effect, and Adolphe Menjou is back to his *Front Page* form.

There may be less in Harold Lloyd's window, but what there is is good. The hat is at a rakish angle; the tooth-brush fairly bristles with wit.

WE HOPE:

That Gasparcolor will hold and develop the excellent unit created by C. H. Dand.

That Angus MacPhail, associate producer at Gaumont-British, will step out of the studios and publish the ideas he says he has for documentary production.

That the lecture series on fishing contemplated by the B.B.C. will not be afraid of vested interests.

That publicity officers will realise the value of shooting their indoor publicity films in winter, and their outdoor publicity films in summer—and not vice versa.

That the same publicity officers will not all make up their minds at once to begin work in May, and start fighting for the very few competent directors available.

That the present mania for building studio space will soon make studios such a glut on the market that independents will come into their own.

That Educational and General Services, in paying cash down for educational films, will find many imitators.

That when English money has bought Universal, Paramount, M.G.M., Warners and all the other American companies, Americans will still go on making American films.

That the committee set up by the Board of Trade to consider quota will examine carefully our article in last issue on "The Scandal of Quota."

That the proposal of both G.B. and Korda to produce films of General Gordon will make for bigger and better biography. And that Mussolini will buy the world-rights on both versions.

News From Abroad

The film of Hervey Allen's *Anthony Adverse*, best-seller novel, is being directed by Mervyn le Roy for Warner Brothers.

Twelve men spent six months collecting authentic historical data of the Napoleonic war period, and it has taken two years to complete the script.

* * *

Eugene Schufftan, inventor of the Schufftan trick process, has done the camera-work on a Spanish film, *Maria de la O*.

* * *

Mussolini has ordered the Banca Nationale del Lavoro to form a film department, which will give credit to film companies.

Especial interest is shown for films dealing with war, and the subjugation of uncultured races.

* * *

Tancred Ibsen, son of the Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen, has directed a dramatic feature, *Poor Millionaire*, for Swedish Ire Films.

* * *

The Syndicat d'Artisans Français du Film, in a letter to the French Ministry of Labour, complains that there are too many foreigners in French studios.

* * *

Representative Culkin, of New York, speaking on the Pettengill anti-block booking and blind-selling bill in Congress, urges that cinemas in the United States should be a public utility under Federal supervision.

* * *

Joris Ivens' *Rain*, *Borinage* and *New Earth* have been shown for the first time in America by the New York New Film Alliance. Ivens, last heard of in Russia, was present, and spoke on Russian production.

* * *

The first French animated cartoon, *Pierrette*, has been made by Pierre Bourgeon.

* * *

Andre Roosevelt, cousin of President Roosevelt, is heading a camera expedition into unexplored regions of Ecuador.

Although the expedition is primarily for scientific purposes, a silent film will be made.

* * *

The Educational Film Department of the Svensk Film Industry, the biggest Swedish company, has arranged for distribution of their pictures throughout Britain and America.

* * *

Darryl Zanuck will produce some war films for Fox next year.

The announced reason is that the Will Hays Code, by doing away with gangster films, has killed adventure on the screen.

* * *

A studio has been opened in Paris for doctoring, re-arranging and "saving" films "in trouble."

* * *

The Authors' League of America is attempting to form an American Writers' Trust, which will act for the Authors' Guild, the Dramatists' Guild, and the Broadcasting Writers' Guild. The League will deal with writers' contracts, working conditions, etc.

IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE!

AMERICAN LABOUR PROTEST

The Central Labour Council of Los Angeles, backed by the five million members of the American Federation of Labour, are protesting vigorously to the American government against the present widespread use of U.S. Army and Navy personnel in movie production.

They point out that the studios have saved one million dollars in recent months in wages alone by the use of the military and naval forces in films depicting fighting-service themes. This saving has caused drastic loss of employment to actors, production experts and other film workers.

Military and naval themes have lately figured large in Hollywood production schedules. *Shipmates Forever*, *Follow the Fleet*, *Miss Pacific Fleet*, *Thunder in the East*, *Professional Soldier*, *Westpoint of the Air*—these and other films, representing the use of the fighting forces, are cited against the production companies by the labour spokesmen. They emphasise that the competence of studio craftsmanship to re-enact war scenes has been proved by such films as *What Price Glory*, *The Big Parade*, *Farewell to Arms* and *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

The Screen Actors' Guild of Hollywood alleges that the practice has now extended to dressing up the military in the uniforms of foreign armies.

It is said that in a recent Warner Bros. production, *Sons o' Guns*, some two hundred members of the California National Guard were dressed as German soldiers. They prepared their film manœuvres during official drill hours, and then obtained leave of absence from their regular jobs to assist at the shooting of the film. They displaced two hundred actors. In most cases no payment is made by the producing company, the military authorities supplying personnel, equipment, and expert advice free of charge.

Aggravating the grievance is the feeling that exhibitors of the service-made films are reaping financial benefits accruing from the high exploitation-value of authentic atmosphere and material while the circumstances of production have created unemployment in the studios. The more sinister consideration of free propaganda to the U.S. War Department is also a source of extreme indignation.

Where Children May HISS—

Miss Winifred Harley, organiser of the Children's Film Society's monthly meetings at the Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, employs two simple tests to discover the audience's reaction to different films.

In the first test, Miss Harley demands that the children shall clap the films they like and hiss the films they dislike. A half-and-half reaction is followed by discussion among the children to clarify the intentions of the film. At the showing of the G.P.O. film, *Colour Box*, the audience began by hissing, but caught up the rhythm as the film progressed, and ended by clapping.

In the second test, Miss Harley invites individual criticisms of the films by post. A six-year-old appreciation of a comedy ran: "I like the coloured film best where the funny man put a bullet on instead of his head, and that's why I like it because he put on a bullet instead of his head." —which is perhaps as near as anyone has got to an æsthetic of humour.

Miss Harley claims that these tests have revealed that the children prefer a programme of shorts to a normal feature programme, and that a specially-edited news-reel may well be used as an instrument for promoting discussion. She is planning future programmes on a shorts basis.

At every meeting a talk is given by a film-worker. Paul Rotha, Mary Field, Stuart Legg and Evelyn Spice have each explained one aspect of production. Visits to the cinema's projection-room are also organised so that the children may acquire knowledge of the technical side of showing films.

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EDITORIAL

Foreigners in our Midst

LAST MONTH *W.F.N.* published, under the heading "Hegira," a list of German *émigrés*. Most of them are now working in British studios. They have joined the hundreds of experts who have come in from European countries and the United States. From a film point of view, England represents a gold rush, with all the gaudy, undisciplined excitement associated with gold-rushing. A cosmopolitan crowd is fighting for overnight fortunes. Promotion is more important than production.

We have only one interest in this glamorous scene, and it is not in the profits of promotion. We want to see good British films; we want to see the creative reputation of this country stand high in the main streets of the world. We believe this tangled scene is a necessary stage in the process.

THE GAIN

A great deal of sucker-money has flooded into production on the heels of Korda's remarkable success with *Henry VIII*. Not all the sucker-money will avoid disappointment. But the present rush stage is a necessary stage. It breeds excitement and ambition. It gives to British production what it has always lacked: a Napoleonic scale in its production plans. In the long run, the mad talkers and the wild promisers will do better than they know, and will be more effective than they intend.

GREAT NAMES

We welcome, therefore, the adventurers from abroad, though we would not perhaps send a wreath to some of their funerals. Our film world will be the better for them. It will even survive them. And particularly we welcome the great directorial and camera and script names which are being thrown as security into the financial struggle. We welcome Pommer, Lubitsch, Korda, Kortner, Bergner, Cavalcanti, Clair, Sherwood, Ned Mann and a hundred others. We know their quality and we shall learn from them.

We make only one reservation. We ask the foreigners not to turn our British hospitality into a racket. While we appreciate the quality of directorial and camera aces, we ask that they will not use our appreciation as an excuse for bringing in every Tom, Dick and Harry, or German or American equivalent, who happen to be related, or for whom they happen to be sorry.

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

We draw the attention of the Ministry of Labour, the Home Office, all the Members of Parliament and all the national newspapers to what may well become too much of a good thing. We ask them particularly to see that every foreign ace is forced to have a British crew. We have no use for foreign assistant directors, assistant script writers, assistant cameramen and assistant editors.

A thousand young men, both inside the industry and on its doorstep, stand ready to fill all the places of apprenticeship. Let the foreigners return our hospitality by teaching them, and, if they are unwilling, let the Ministry of Labour give them no option.

That way we can secure not only the present of the industry but, what is more important, its future.

Radio v. Film

THE B.B.C. will be given a further ten years of office. We join with other papers in giving them our ceremonial blessing, though we have not the same motives. We are not, like other papers, interested in keeping out competitive advertising, excellent advertising medium as *World Film News* undoubtedly is (still a thousand or two short of the *News of the World*, but that is not surprising).

TRIBUTE FROM WARDOUR STREET

We give our blessing plainly because the B.B.C. represents a mass of good intention and, a mass of good work. Its work for music is particularly distinguished. Its lecture service brings to the public the authoritative word of the nation's experts.

The best tribute we have heard paid to the B.B.C. was recently from a hard-bitten Wardour Street journalist. Discarding the Wardour Street pretence that the B.B.C. is a wash-out, he said: "The B.B.C. never forgets its first duty. It serves society. I wish sometimes that Wardour Street would remember, just a very little, to do the same."

ONE COMPLAINT

So, if in the course of our comment on broadcasting and television, this paper takes a critical line, it is with agreement on central principles. We have only one complaint to make, and this our Manifesto of last month explained in detail. The B.B.C. is largely reproductive in its methods and not creative. It does not yet realise that a great and necessary experience of our time might be given by organising lecture, description and interview in a more imaginative way.

B.B.C.'s ANSWER

We are answered in our criticism by a complacent article in the *Radio Times*. This article suggests that the great audience of the B.B.C. wants its broadcasts simple, and that imaginative experiment would tend to be difficult. It also points to the fact that broadcasts are done quickly and cheaply, and that the new method would be too slow and too expensive.

These are good reasons, and perhaps the difficulties are really insurmountable. If so, both broadcasting and television will fail continuously to interest the more creative minds of our generation. It will be without the excitement we find in great journalism and interpretative art.

THE YOUNG MEN

Young men who are looking to the new arts as media of expression will note this distinction, and they will be slow to enter the service of the B.B.C. If they are artists at all they will despair of finding in the slight and simple exercises of the microphone the opportunity they seek; and they will wisely stand by the superior opportunities of film.

The film world has its great majority activities, and some of them are not very enticing. But unlike broadcasting, it also permits minorities.

"Congratulations, it's an Earthquake!"

THE FIRST NUMBER of *World Film News* had an exciting and varied reception. Friends and enemies sorted themselves out immediately and with violence, and there was no middle course. An untimely telephone call from *The Times* cursed us roundly for our make-up. McKnight Kauffer threatened personal violence by 'phone, and wired ironically "Congratulations, it's an earthquake." The old *Cinema Quarterly* end of the paper took itself quietly to bed.

But for every word of opposition there came a dozen unexpected words of congratulation on this very make-up. Workers in the studios joined with educationists, publicity officers, high officials of the B.B.C. and newspaper editors in giving us welcome.

"LITERATURE" EXPECTED

We shall not publish the plaudits, and we would not dare to publish the curses. But the reaction may be summed up as follows. Our policy is to give information, and concentrate on all creative efforts in the fields of cinema and broadcasting—both high-brow and low-brow. And we are obviously meeting the needs of people who, like ourselves, are actively interested in the two media.

But we fear a certain amount of "literature" is still expected wherever art is discussed. We respect this demand, and hope on occasion to put on our very best academic suiting, but, in general, we shall continue to be as practical in our interests as we can. Art and education and entertainment are to us a practical business, with no great dressing of fol-de-rol. They have to be financed; they have to be thought of; they have to be made.

We shall, we think, miss none of their inspiration by giving the facts, and giving them in terms of action. We only desire that our service of information will strike still deeper into the field, and give a still more active picture of a world in progress.

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE CINEMA

•

Empire programmes of Life, Scenery and Industry, for schools and all those interested in the countries of the British Commonwealth of Nations

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3rd to 9th May—Industrial Britain—Under the City

10th to 16th May—India and Ceylon—Dance of the Harvest

17th to 23rd May—O'er Hill and Dale—Air Post

24th to 30th May—Canada—King Log: Australia—Oranges, Sugar Growing

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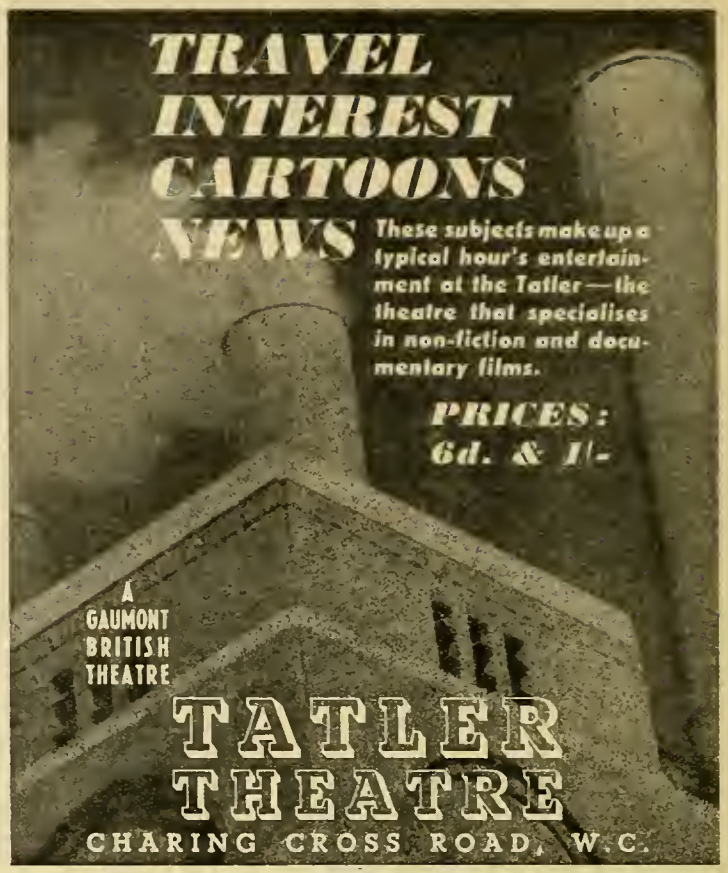

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PRESS ACCUSES GERMANY: VIOLATION OF FILM AGREEMENT ALLEGED

Accusations are being made that recent German films are a threat to world peace.

Press critics are saying that a resolution passed at the Berlin International Film Congress in 1935, to help promote world goodwill, is being scandalously broken by recent German productions.

The resolution called on the world's press "not to review or support any films likely to arouse misunderstanding between nations or endanger international peace."

It is pointed out that Inkishinov, the hero of the Soviet film, *Storm Over Asia*, has been starred in a recent German production, *Friesennot* ("The Misery of the Frieseians"). In it he is a commissar, the big, bad Soviet wolf, in a story about a half-caste girl who is drowned by the Volga Germans because she has associated with a Bolshevik.

Other films are said to contain savage propaganda against the U.S.S.R. They are: *Henker, Frauen und Soldaten* ("Henchmen, Women and Soldiers") and *Schwarze Rosen* ("Dark Roses").

More subtle propaganda is claimed for films dealing with French subjects such as *Das Maedchen Johanna* (a German version of the Joan of Arc theme), *Liselotte von der Pfalz*, and *Der Hoehere Befehl* ("The Higher Command"). In these, critics have detected an anti-French tendency partly disguised in mediæval or eighteenth-century dress.

It is to be noted that *Second Bureau*, a French film recently seen in London, makes Germany very much the villain in a melodramatic story of espionage and treachery.

JOSEPH GOEBBELS SETS RULES FOR CINEMA

- "卐 The film must follow its own laws and break off from the ordinary story.
- "卐 It must free itself from the vulgar mediocrity of a mob amusement, yet never lose its intimate relations with the masses of the people: public taste is educable in the good and the bad sense.
- "卐 Its scope is incredibly wide, but more than any form of art, the film must be popular in the best sense.
- "卐 It must deal with the relations of common life.
- "卐 It must have State support, like music and drama.
- "卐 It must be in harmony with the spirit of the times.

And again . . 卐 . .

"The straightforward and natural film, giving vivid and plastic expression to our times, may become one of the most valuable tools in the construction of a better, purer and more realistic world of artistic possibilities. Let us resolve to be natural as life is natural and true to the facts which ring true, so that the film can raise the hearts of man and lead them into a better world through the relation of the Eternal."

Russian Army Salutes Pratt Boorman

Pratt Boorman, editor of the "Kent Messenger," has had the unusual notion of presenting to his readers the Russian record of the Kiev manœuvres. From the Soviet Embassy, where it was shown to an exclusive audience and bewildered military experts, with its spectacular scenes of Russia's parachute army, this film moved direct to Maidstone and Canterbury.

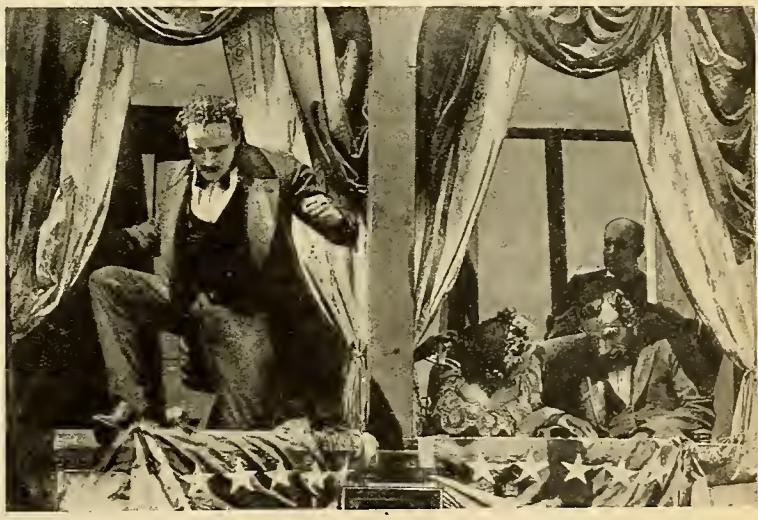
Voroshilov's Bolsheviks were warmly welcomed by the farmers of the fruit belt, and excited readers of the *Messenger* made the journey from Lenham, Harrietsham, and points east to report at the midnight showing, and consider the latest points in strategy. Bernstein Theatres co-operated with Boorman.

This enterprise is typical of one of England's most up-to-date papers, and almost the only local which can beat Beaverbrook in its own territory for fast journalism. It is also a reminder of what may happen if the theatres fall down on the supply of significant news-reels.

Griffith Shocks Modern New York

D. W. Griffith's *Intolerance*, made in 1916, was recently shown to the members of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library. Old-stage movie fans will remember that the film is based on four historical themes of intolerance, each one ending in disaster. But Griffith's treatment of the Crucifixion, the Fall of Babylon and the Massacre of St. Bartholomew shocked its select New York audience. Dowagers are said to have squirmed under the more bloody moments, while the beheading scene in Elmo Lincoln's *Man of Valour* sequence provoked a yelp of horror. The directorate are now faced with the delicate problem of protecting their polite audience from the stronger scenes of the great directors of the past.

Concurrently, a New York department-store has begun to use early movies to attract customers to the counters. A trial programme, presented free in the store, included *Infatuation*, with Gaby Deslys (1915), *Blue Waters*, with Norma Shearer (1921), and *Journeys through Filmland*, showing glimpses of the Talmadge sisters, Gloria Swanson and Thomas Meighan. So successful was the first programme, that the store continued the shows with nineteenth-century news-reels.



From Griffith's "Birth of a Nation": the assassination of Abraham Lincoln by Edwin Booth. This was one of the first epics.

In this country the London Film Society recently showed three pre-war films discovered by Alberto Cavalcanti in the markets of the Porte d'Italie, Paris. The titles were: *A Bunch of Violets* (melodrama of a workman and a modiste), *The Secrets of a Queen* (an incident in the private life of Marie Antoinette), and *Satan Finds Mischief* by Georges Meliès, French pioneer of trick photography. The brilliant ingenuity of Meliès' 1904 trick-work stole the laurels from the modern films in the programme.

CO-ORDINATE BRAINS FOR NEWS-REEL says SANGER

"Evolution of Commentary is a Thrilling Business."

Gerald Sanger, *Producer of Fox Movietone News, has built up one of the most progressive units in the country.*

Arising out of the popular debunking of natural sound as a fetish, and out of a popular desire to see more in a news-reel than four or five subjects, commentary began to become general, primarily as a method of shortening subjects. This may seem a fallacious explanation, but it was the true reason for the advent of the commentator. Prove it by imagining the modern 40-ft. subject presented without commentary; it would have to run 120 ft. and be preceded by a title of 15 ft.!

The commentator, having arrived as a convenience, has been able to justify himself by his merits. Again, it is only necessary to look back a few months to realise how he dominates the present-day news-reel. The study of commentary is engrossing lively minds in the make-up theatre. Camera-work and cutting are comparatively well-known sciences; commentary is still rather an unexplored art, and its evolution is quite a thrilling business.

The commentary writer has to be something of a playwright; the commentator something of an actor. The first two requirements of the latter are that he or she should be free from vocal mannerisms and be able to talk fast without the appearance of hurry. After that, it is a question of individuality.

The orthodox practice among news-reels is to have a single commentator, who writes his own commentary. The unorthodox practice is to have a number of commentators, who may or may not write their own commentary.

There is nothing more false in a commentator not speaking his own composition than in an actor not speaking his own lines. The production of a news-reel nowadays is a complex task, and the more brains brought to it the better the result, if properly co-ordinated.

Commentary is, of course, very closely allied to cutting; and it is a controversial question whether negative should first be cut and commentary written to the cut subject, or commentary written first and negative cut to the approved commentary.

As an advocate of the commentary factor, I believe in drafting a commentary along lines agreed with the cutter, and adjusting later either the subject or commentary, as the editor decides.

The necessary co-operation of cutter and commentary-writer is itself a reason for the existence of the latter distinct from the commentator, where a news-reel uses several voices.

My faith in the multiple-voice formula is based on a diversity not only vocal, but in subject treatment. Different voices enable adjacent subjects to be treated with levity and dignity without the former detracting from the latter. The system facilitates the introduction of speed and humour without disparaging authority. It offers scope and potentialities for future development; and in this restless industry that is a very important aspect.

NEWS-REELS VERSUS THE CENSOR

While the newspaper press in France is free to write about political events, news-reels are no longer allowed to report without censorship.

Following the parliamentary debate held after the attack on the Socialist leader, Leon Blum, strict censorship is being put on film reports.

Shipments have been held up at the Customs, and even shots, taken by an amateur on the Blum incident for private purposes, have been confiscated.

THE FILM AND PHOTO LEAGUE

invites the co-operation of men and women who desire to produce pictures dealing with the real life and aspirations of the vast mass of British citizens today. The league aims at producing films and photographs of social and cultural value; and at co-ordinating the activities of individuals and organisations sympathetic to these aims. It also organises lectures, debates, shows, etc., among its activities. Join us—our new address is

4a PARTON STREET, RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1

Travel Talks

James A. Fitzpatrick, the man responsible for the Fitzpatrick Travel Talks, is on a world cruise making two film features for M.G.M. One is to be a full-length travel film in colour with commentary in five different languages. The other will be a story-film in black-and-white.

In the last six months M.G.M. have distributed the following Fitzpatrick Travel Talks:

Switzerland	Black-and-white.
Tibet, Land of Isolation	Black-and-white.
Italy, Land of Inspiration	Black-and-white.
Scotland, the Bonnie	Black-and-white.
British Guiana	Black-and-white.
Africa, Land of Contrast	Black-and-white.
Citadels of the Mediterranean	Black-and-white.
Historic Mexico City	Technicolor.
Los Angeles, Wonder Country of the West	Technicolor.
Colourful Guatemala	Technicolor.
Zeeland, the Lost Paradise	Technicolor.
Ireland, the Emerald Isle	Technicolor.

Public to Gauge Film Values

SIDNEY BERNSTEIN'S famous questionnaire goes out again this month. It will ask the members of his audiences in eighteen theatres what stars, pictures, directors, types of film and programme they prefer. A quarter of a million questionnaires will be issued, and half of them will be returned. They will tell us the taste of Suburbia.

The results we expect will not differ greatly from last year, except in the names of the stars of the moment. Some stars will be up, some down. But thriller-adventure, musical-comedy and comedy will still be preferred by the men, and musical comedy and society drama will be preferred by the women. Comedy will continue to be low on the female list. Tom Walls will be high in the list of directors, and Pabst and Pudovkin, if they are remembered at all, will be at the bottom.

We are not specially concerned with Mr. Bernstein's gentle conclusions. He is a business man and will serve the majority, and serve it well. But remembering the record of previous years, we draw attention to one item which will just as certainly repeat itself. There will be represented a 15 per cent minority which has a mind for one-feature programmes and a taste for shorts. Mr. Bernstein, following the majority, will continue to ignore it.

All over the country there is this 15 per cent minority and, this year, it may even have crept to 16 or 17. It does not represent the multi-millions of cinema, but it still represents an audience of millions.

Who is organising to meet its taste? There is the Academy and its imitators, and the Tatler and its imitators; there are the film societies and the non-theatrical circuits. Are they exhausting the possibilities? And is Mr. Bernstein right in discarding in his exhibition plans 15 per cent of the British people? It is, when you consider it, a large minority. (Ed. *W.F.N.*)

SOUND MOVES AHEAD
MORE MUSICAL MUSIC

An improved sound-recording technique which the Radio Corporation of America has evolved may re-introduce to the screen some of the performers who went out when the talkies came in, because their voices had that shrill timbre which has hitherto been fatal to successful recording.

The fundamental cause of the difficulty has been that all photographic images, of whatsoever sort, have lacked the degree of precision required in recording high-frequency sound waves. The sound-image makes far more exacting demands than the picture-image, in spite of the latter's enormous magnification on the screen.

Two important causes of imperfection are the tendency of white light to break up in a lens into rays of different colours which all come to a focus at different points according to their wave-lengths, and the tendency of those with short rays to penetrate the film and reflect back again.

The new technique consists in using only long rays—the ultra-violet—for making the sound-track photograph. The rest are filtered out. In this way finer detail is achieved in the sound-image, which, if the theatres are sufficiently well-equipped to make full use of this improvement, will result in more natural speech and more musical music.

VISUAL OUSTED BY SOUND TRACK

What may happen when the sound-track runs away with the picture was made alarmingly clear at a lecture given to the New York branch of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers recently.

Under the title of "Visual Accompaniment," three forms of film were described, in which the picture humbly aims at providing you with something appropriate to look at while you listen to the music on the sound-track.

LANDSCAPES IN COLOUR

The first type simply consisted of a series of appropriate landscapes in colour. It was, in fact, a sort of crazy travel film where the scenery evoked the music, instead of the usual opposite arrangement.

THE SAVAGE METHOD

The second raised false hopes. It was called the "Savage" method. But this, it turned out, was just a tribute to a Mr. Eugene Savage, its inventor.

In brief, it merely consisted in substituting painted landscapes, slid along on several layers of celluloid, for real ones. Such a method must naturally stand or fall by the sort of landscape that gets on to the celluloid, so one is glad to have a description of the accompaniment made for the Unfinished Symphony.

"At the opening chords we are led into a gracious and beautiful world of mountain heights and castles, mirrored in the depths of a river, which is seen beyond a sculptured balustrade and varied foliage. With the romantic love motif, two figures appear seated under a spreading tree by the water's edge. . . . A sudden storm overwhelms the scene—the man stands by the sea gazing at the heights as though challenged by them.

"Two Muses move across the face of the moon above him, encouraging his aspirations. The scenery changes to one of sheer barren heights. . . . The ascending vapours carry his last aspirations heavenward. The Muses gather over him in the vapour, and with the brusque chords

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of the closing music take him with them upward and out of the picture." And that's that.

RHYTHMICAL PULSATION

A third method is to obtain rhythmical pulsations of abstract form in time with the music by fiddling with three "dimmers" controlling the light from three slide projectors, which superimpose their images on a single screen. One might come to welcome this sort after prolonged indulgence in symbolical landscape.

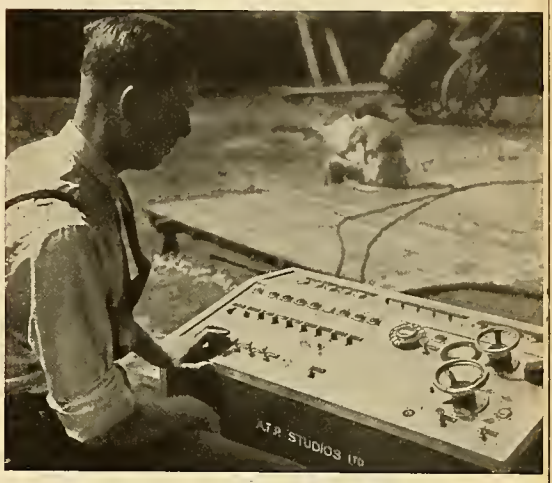
But if the Americans think that these three methods exhaust the possibilities of Visual Accompaniment, we in this country are in a position to give them the Lye.

FILM INSTITUTE GOES TECHNICAL

The British Film Institute is opening a technical department. This department will deal with the ever-increasing flow of technical enquiries which reach the Institute, and will undertake any research into non-theatrical projection questions likely to be of use to educationists.

The National Film Library will also be run, and a small theatre is being equipped for 35 mm. and 16 mm., silent and sound.

ROBOT SWITCHBOARD



Portable Organ Has Extensive Repertoire

Great economy in time and trouble can be effected by centralised electrical control over the highly complex mechanical equipment of the modern studio.

The instrument shown in the accompanying illustration is, in fact, a switchboard at the A.T.P. Studios, which has reached such an advanced stage of development that it prefers to be referred to as a "portable organ." However, the harmonies which its stops produce are not musical but practical. They ensure the right things happening at the right moment in the right order and in the most expeditious manner.

Its repertoire is extremely extensive, for it signals to the electricians for lighting, gives the "ready" to the director, rings the silence bell, lights up silence signs, locks the doors, starts both picture-cameras and sound-cameras (flashing on identification marks, which dispense with the need for clappers), and also controls the ventilation, heating and air-conditioning, and the huge sliding, sound-proof doors, 14 feet wide and 18 feet high.

Mr. Double, the designer of this astonishing instrument, kindly played to the representative of *W.F.N.* a short improvisation on its keys, which produced a visibly soothing effect on some highly-strung artistes who happened at the time to be rehearsing on the set.

COLOUR PROCESSES DEFINED

Additive processes: those processes in which the different colours are placed *side by side* on the film. Some additive processes record each dominant colour on a separate frame of film; others place minute particles of the dominant colours side by side on a single frame.

Subtractive processes: those processes in which the colours are placed *one behind the other* on the film. All methods based on a subtractive process reproduce the dominant colours by means of several layers of dyed emulsion on the film.

More Co-operation Needed

CENTRALIZATION AND BOOKING PROBLEMS DISCUSSED

by Thorold Dickinson

In the first issue of "W.F.N." it is stated that the many film societies throughout the country are working independently and intensively towards the organisation of the critical section among the film public, in order to influence the future development of cinema.

This is the true and sad state of affairs that exists to-day. Disinterested co-operation is practically non-existent. It is possible nowadays for anyone in a provincial town, who has some leisure, energy and organising ability, to shine as a local light by running a film society and posing as the local authority on intelligent cinema. He can, but he need not, affiliate with the British Film Institute. If he does not, he gains more kudos as an independent authority. He can, but he need not, join the Federation of Film Societies and enjoy the benefits of the Federation at the small annual rate of 1½ per cent of his society's revenue. He can make friends with the London Film Society, and take advantage of the constitution of that pioneer body.

Now the secretary of the London Film Society, itself a non-profit-making, renting organisation, is also the secretary of the Federation. This is reasonable, for the work of the former does in fact cover much of the ground of the Federation. But even if all the seventeen societies which comprise the Federation were to pay their dues regularly, the revenue would still not pay for the amount of work involved in carrying out the best interests of the Federation.

Problem of Theatres

It is obvious that the London Film Society is at a disadvantage owing to the presence in London of these specialised theatres, whose existence depends on the interest of audiences stimulated originally by the foundation and success of the London Society. The existence of these theatres is regarded by some people as a reason for closing down the London Film Society, but the management of these theatres would regard such a proposal as disastrous, for progress and the airing of advanced views is the life-blood of the articulate film audience, and the experimental work achieved by the London Film Society eases the problems of the specialised theatres, and this, incidentally, helps the provincial societies as well.

The present system is obviously wrong, because of the lack of co-operation between the provincial and the London societies. The specialised theatres import intelligent entertainment, but the exclusive field of the film society movement lies in study and experiment. At present the council of the London society choose their imports with more or less success, while the provincial societies send representatives to the London Society's performances and choose or reject as they please, without a hint of co-operation with the pioneer organisation. Naturally, the provincial societies cannot be forced to accept product, booked blind, as we say in the trade.

The fault lies in the Federation. This body should elect an active booking committee, composed of persons of taste who are available to view new films in London at short notice, and to choose for revival, subjects which have passed out of circulation, and of which a special copy has to be printed. The committee should be empowered to guarantee the financial support of their respective societies for the films chosen.

Towards Greater Security

If only four films were so circulated per season, the burden on the London Society would be eased considerably, and the Federation would enjoy an increased responsibility and a greater security than exists at present. The London Society would then have a greater definite return to offer its clients on the continent on the Federation's behalf, and this would strengthen its resources in the selection of its four remaining programmes in the season. The remaining provincial programmes would have these films to select from as well as the products of the specialised theatres.

This still shows Andreiev's design for a set for "The Beloved Vagabond"

and this one how the producer carried out Adreiev's ideas

TYNESIDE SOCIETY SHOWS ART DIRECTORS' WORK

A collection of drawings, illustrating the work of the art-directors, Vincent Korda and Andre Andreiev, have recently been exhibited by the Tyneside Film Society in Newcastle.

Andre Andreiev, born in St. Petersburg, and trained at the Academy of Arts, found himself at the age of twenty-one in the exacting position of Art-Director to the famous Moscow Art Theatre. This was just before the Russian Revolution. He continued to work at this post until the Revolution, when he fled to Germany.

Within a year or two, he became one of the most sought-after set-designers in Berlin: both for the stage and the cinema. Since then, his reputation has become international with films like *Raskolnikov*, *Therese Racquin*, *Drei Groschen Oper*, *The Last Company*, and *Volga-Volga*.

He is a comparative newcomer in England. His first film here was *The Dictator* last year. His latest work was on the Toeplitz film, *The Beloved Vagabond*, recently filmed at Ealing and due for release shortly.

Vincent Korda, London Film Productions' Art-Director and younger brother of Alexander Korda, designed the sets for *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, *Catherine the Great*, *The Private Life of Don Juan*, *The Ghost Goes West*, *Things to Come* and the *Scarlet Pimpernel*.

In 1935 his work was shown in the Exhibition of Hungarian Painters, London.

FILMING THE GOSPEL A DANGEROUS POLICY

by John Grierson

The churches are stirring to the use of films, and will presently, as the discussion warms, raise a prettier problem of religious policy than has struck the churches since the quarrel over transubstantiation. But I expect the roles will be reversed. The Roman Catholic Church will hold that you cannot turn the life of Christ into the substance of film. The Methodists will have no such compunction in giving us the reality. The horrid little pictures on the Sunday-school texts will come to life.

As a Scotsman, I hope the Church of Scotland will take its stand with Rome against this imminent vulgarisation of the Gospel.

I have seen these pictures of Jesus. Ten years ago in America I reviewed a batch of them for a New York paper, and wrote one of the rudest articles of my life: and no wonder. If I did not head it "Jesus in a Nightgown" I should have done, for the preposterous array of nightgowns, wigs and false beards was a travesty of every reality the Gospels could possibly intend.

The films were well-meant and were, in fact, produced with the full authority of very good church people in the States. But a fundamental mistake had been made. This "Life" which, by imaginative teaching and preaching, has come to call up every depth of association, was presented *tout simple* as a costume drama: crooks, sheep and Palestinian backcloths complete.

If I remember rightly, I drew some attention to the fact that when you present miracles on the screen you are only doing what every film wizard from Mèlies onward has done more brilliantly already. Water into wine is a simple camera trick. The Raising of Lazarus may be safely left to the second assistant cameraman. The very worst aspect of these American films was that they turned Jesus into a sleight-of-hand merchant.

I put these points crudely because I am disturbed at this new church activity. I am afraid that, however sound the Methodists may be in their intentions, they will perpetrate the same ghastly mistake. I was astounded, and even affected, at the reception which my New York article got in America. I thought it would shock every religious susceptibility.

Instead of that, it was repeated in various parts of America. I got letters from all over, standing with me in my proposal that, in the name of religion, these lives of Christ should be burned in the public square. But I did not participate in an even more violent reaction which appeared from the Middle West. In the Bible belt the Ku Klux Klan stepped in and banned the film because Jesus had been cast as a Jew.

Here is the problem upon us now. The Archbishop of Canterbury forms an advisory council with film members in John Maxwell and F. W. Baker. The Church of Scotland, at a meeting of the Scottish Churches' Film Guild, forms another committee to report on the possibilities of production. Fearful mention is made by one enthusiastic minister of "exploiting literary-minded ministers" and "using the valuable assistance of the many amateur dramatic societies" in producing the whole history of the Church. One already fears the worst.

The Methodist Church, in a recent, very thorough discussion of the problem from all angles, also gives its emphasis to a dramatic presentation of Gospel themes. "The Gospel in pictures will make a similar appeal to the Gospel in song." "An analysis of objects as shown by the pioneers suggests these three distinct purposes: *first*, an actual presentation of the evangelical Gospel." Shades of de Mille, are we to have these saccharine upliftings and exhibitionist pursuit of gleams all over again?

One can imagine it from the words of the Rev. W. H. Lax. Speaking not too diffidently of his first appearance in a religious film, he says: "People who have seen it say that they miss the Lax smile and the Lax gesture." If that is the way it goes, may the churches preserve us from both.

But lest I appear too negative in saying " 'ware acting, 'ware these Gospel stories in film," let me record how sensible some of the suggestions have been. A particularly pleasing thought is that the ministers in Edinburgh applauded when someone spoke of their boring missionary films. Boring and incompetent they are, every one I have seen. A very considerable emphasis, too, has been given in the discussion to the possibility of using films in educational and social work.

Here, I believe, in all practical and, I hope, ecclesiastical good sense, is the real beginning. I suggest to the churches bluntly that they cannot take pictures into the church service without great danger of cheapening what virtue it retains. But social service is something one may bite on and finance and do well. Even now films are available on housing and health, and kindred matters, which permit a start.

As I see it, the future of films in the church is a much more simple and straightforward matter than the more melodramatic evangelist is likely to realise. It will be quietly and efficiently and persistently in the church halls, and not in the staggering shadow of the altar. It will be in the discussion groups of the church societies and in the simple service of community needs.

I hope I shall not be accused of belittling the churches if I suggest it may more readily be in teaching cookery and child welfare to the women, and hiking to the boys, and good housing to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners than (in consummate wickedness) bedazzling poor morons into the fears and trivialities of "salvation."

The churches represent still the greatest community organisation in the country and, for large sections of the populace, the only community centres in which civic welfare can be promoted and citizenship made imaginative and real. That is the churches' opportunity. Let them use it. It may bring some of the lost millions back to the church. It may even bring the churches back to the community life.

Have the churches forgotten?

MUSIC AND FILM

Illustration or Creation ?

by Hans Eisler

Hans Eisler, Professor of music at the New School for Social Research, New York, is in England for a few months to arrange the music for *Pagliacci*, a Capitol Film production.

In 1927 the manager of the small and unknown Triergon Company asked Paul Hindemith and myself to compose a small film for the Music Festival in Baden Baden.

In those days sound-recording apparatus was still very primitive. I remember very well indeed how Masolle, one of the inventors of the Tobis System, exhorted me, in a paternal manner, to avoid certain musical phrases. "Barring this," he added, "you can do what you like to 'underline' all 'rhythms.' " In an abstract film by Ruttmann, Hindemith composed a musical background to *Felix the Cat*, and the "underlining" of the rhythm of the film brought forth an excellent humorous effect.

Considering the state in which film music was at this period, a film composer was considered clever and useful if he understood how to "illustrate" the happenings on the screen with music. If a machine was shown on the screen the music had to whirr, if a man was walking along a street the music had to walk, etc. This principle of illustrating was supplemented by "sentimental" and "picturesque" music. The "sentimental" was used to make the sorrow of a lover still more sorrowful by means of adequate music. The "picturesque" were those horrible musical pieces which when green pastures were shown fell into detestable sobbing, or became angry to suggest the roaring sea.

Mute and Sound Combined

In 1930 I worked with Granovsky on his film, *Song of Life*. The birth of a child was shown, and the picture of the baby was accompanied by a ballad which depicted all the things which were waiting for the child. This tempted Granovsky to show the same things in the film as well. Music and film depicting the horrors of this world resulted in a combination of picture and sound which at that time created much interest. It was fundamentally different from the method in which songs were usually introduced into films.

In the same year I was working together with Victor Trivas on the film, *War is Hell*. Of the instances in which we succeeded to employ music and picture in an original way, I would like to quote only one: the beginning of the war. A workman says good-bye to wife and child—on the way to the barracks we see depressed men accompanied by their wives. Martial music starts very softly, gradually increasing until it reaches a fortissimo. While this music is played good-natured and anxious men turn into ferocious warriors.

In the film *Kuhle-Wampe*, directed by Dudow, dwellings of poor people were shown. These very quiet pictures were counterpointed with extremely energetic and stimulating music, which suggested not only pity with the poor, but at the same time provoked protest against such a state of affairs.

PAGE FOR
AMATEURS

NORMAN McLAREN

Glasgow Amateurs Plan Production

Norman McLaren, whose *Colour Cocktail* won the *W.F.N.* prize at the Scottish Amateur Film Festival, made a film while on a visit to Russia.

When edited, the film will deal somewhat briefly with the architectural reconstruction of cities in the Soviet Union, and more particularly with the Ten-year Plan for the reconstruction of Moscow. The aim of the film is to show how Moscow city is being planned as a complete unit, and how the form of the new Moscow will reflect the social structure of its inhabitants.

At the moment he is working on the scenarios of four one-reel 16-mm. films. The first, *Homes versus Health*, will point out the influence of slum environment and low income on juvenile health, and its relation to the occurrence of tuberculosis.

The second will deal with the raising of the school-leaving age, and will emphasise the economic factors which produce entirely different attitudes to school and education in the middle-class and working-class child.

Colonial Expansion will show the geographical spread and development of colonies by the main industrial powers. With the use of ciné-diagrams and animated symbols, the period from 1500 to 1936 will be covered. Maps and charts will be shot on Kodachrome film.

The fourth, a film on diet, health and income, will also be shot in colour, and animated objects, charts and statistics will be used. Much of the information has been taken from *Diet, Health and Income*, the recent and widely-publicised book by Sir John Orr.

There are 36 film-workers' unions in Mexico. They have combined to urge the government to make the world Mexican film-conscious.

In 1932, Mexico produced 4 films; in 1934, 27; and in 1935, approximately 50.

16-mm. Confusion Ended S.M.P.E. Official Standard

The vexed question of standard specifications for 16-mm. sound-projectors and prints in this country has at length been settled by arbitration. Since 1933, two different sets of specifications have existed, the S.M.P.E. (American) standard, and the D.I.N. (German) standard.

The British Standards Institution, under the chairmanship of Lord Riverdale, have announced their decision in favour of the S.M.P.E. standard. The opposing standards were submitted to the Institution for arbitration with Mr. F. A. Hoare (Western Electric) presenting the S.M.P.E. case, and Mr. H. Bruce Woolfe (G.B. Equipments) representing D.I.N.

The B.S.I. decision reverses the recommendations of the British Film Institute and the International Institute of Educational Cinematography at Rome. Both these bodies had advised the adoption of the D.I.N. standard in Great Britain. It was felt at the time that they had bowed too early to superior pressure on the part of the D.I.N. people.

CONFUSION OF TWO STANDARDS

The existence of the two standards side-by-side resulted from one of the most notorious misunderstandings in movie history. In November 1932, *The Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers* published American specifications for 16-mm. sound-film standards. The drawings contained the word "title" so placed as to show that the sound-track, when seen from the projector light-source, was on the left of the film, and that the base, as opposed to the emulsion, faced the light-source.

In April 1933, *Die Kinotechnik* published the equivalent German specifications, known as the D.I.N. standard. All dimensions coincided with the S.M.P.E. standard, but a note in the text explained that the sound-track, when seen from the light-source, lay to the right of the film and that the emulsion faced the light-source.

Thus the two sets of standards differed as regards the position of the sound-track and the placing of the film in the projector gate. But neither the American nor the German engineers spotted the discrepancy until seven months later.

In November 1933, American 16-mm. sound-films went to Paris for the International Motion Picture Exposition. It was discovered that they could not be run in the D.I.N. projectors.

D.I.N. ENDORSED IN EUROPE

In June 1934, Dr. De Feo, of the I.I.E.C., called a conference at Stresa "to determine 16-mm. sound-film standards for the educational field." By a curious oversight, the cable inviting a delegate from the S.M.P.E. reached America only two days before the conference. The S.M.P.E. hastily appointed as delegate an American resident in Europe, but there was no time to give him the proper instructions. The conference endorsed the D.I.N. standard for European use, with the American dissenting.

Another conference took place in Berlin in April 1935, under the auspices of the Reichsfilmkammer (the Nazi State film organisation). A special committee on the "International Standardisation of Narrow Gauge Film" would not permit open discussion. They informed the S.M.P.E. delegate that the Stresa conference had already decided in favour of D.I.N.

Since then, 16-mm. sound projectors employing the two differing standards have appeared on the market, causing hesitation and confusion on the part of potential buyers in the educational field. The original mistake and its confirmation by the I.I.E.C. have probably kept back 16-mm. sound for two full years.

SEA-HORSES

From a Film by Jean Painlevé recently shown at London Film Society

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

THE WAR OFFICE has recently been preparing a pamphlet of instructions on what the public are to do in the case of air raids. It will be shot out in millions to the country's householders. Many authorities on propaganda are said to have been consulted, and the pamphlet is reported to be a masterpiece of simple instruction.

It is proposed to produce a film to supplement the effect of the pamphlet in all the country's theatres. The principal companies have all offered to co-operate, but it is believed that the choice of producer and the desire of circuits for exclusive runs have delayed the proposal.

* * *

DONALD FINDLAY, the enterprising publicity idea-man of **DERRY AND TOMS**, has, as a result of assiduous attendance at the Film Society, introduced Lotte Reiniger to window-dressing. Her silhouettes now light up the spring fashion displays in Kensington High Street.

Findlay is an Australian, and apt to quote Australian progressiveness when the salesmen at Derry and Toms insist on crowding the windows. Reiniger's silhouettes have, in fact, to be searched for in the cluttered display of frills, modes and furbelows. But even this progress in a Derry and Toms window is sensational. Barker's follow on with more Reiniger.

* * *

A. G. HIGHET, Assistant Controller, Public Relations, at the **POST OFFICE**, has initiated a new use of film at the Ideal Homes Exhibition. He has combined living lecture and film, but not in the ordinary way of having the lecturer speak to the screen.

Lecture episode and film episode alternate, the lecturer striking a general note, the film following with a dramatic episode in illustration or complement. The technique has only been roughed out in Highet's first example. It will bear even stronger dramatisation of the film episode and a sharper isolation from the lecturer.

Highet now proposes to record the lecturer's voice on blank, cut it in with the film episode, and circulate the whole as a first lecture film in the new technique.

PUBLICITY FILMS have begun production on the first British documentary to be made in Technicolor. The film is sponsored by Cadbury Bros. It deals with the life and industries of Trinidad, with particular emphasis on the cocoa harvest. A. R. Taylor is supervising the production, with Ray Rannahan (who shot *Becky Sharp* and *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*) as cameraman.

* * *

THE KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL FUND is cooperating with G.B.I. in the planning of a film on the rise of the voluntary hospital system in this country. A committee composed of Sir D'Arcy Power, Major Phillips and Dr. Malcolm will act as liaison between the Fund and the producers.

* * *

DUNLOP RUBBER are sponsoring a film tracing the development of the wheel. The film is to be built round a series of dramatised episodes in which actual historical vehicles are used. They include a velocipede, a bone-shaker, a stage-coach and a pennyfarthing bicycle.

Ralph Smart is producing for Publicity Films. The film is designed to advertise the Dunlop "90" tyre.

* * *

BEHIND *The Birth of the Robot*, which is shown on this page, is the figure of **JACK BEDDINGTON**, publicity officer for **SHELL**. Beddington has just returned from New York where, for some months, he has been helping the American organisation with English ideas. He is one of the leading publicity officers of the modern school, with an intimate knowledge of art and artists and an effective conception of how they can be used in advertising.

Beddington has carried his progressive ideas into the use of film. He encouraged Maurice Beck in an early documentary film of London River. He promoted Rotha's *Contact*, and stood by the picture when Wardour Street doubted it. He co-operated with Elton in one of his most successful films of machinery, *The Diesel Engine*. He has now gone the whole hog with the *avant garde* with Len Lye's latest in colour. He deserves its success.

SHELL'S ROBOT IN COLOUR

The Birth of the Robot, produced in Gaspar-color by Humphrey Jennings and Len Lye for Shell-Mex, will lead a new movement in colour production.

This 600-foot film represents the first serious British effort at colour animation. It is an unqualified success. Its boldness of experiment and excellent animation will make it the meat of every film society in the country. Its superb colour and high production polish will recommend it to specialist exhibitors in spite of its publicity sponsorship.

A formidable roster of experts contributed to the making of the film. In addition to Jennings and Lye, who were responsible for the direction and animation, the production staff included C. H. Dand (script), John Banting and Alan Farmer (design and construction of models), Alex Strasser (camera man) and Jack Ellitt (sound-charting and cutting). The music of the film is from Gustav Holst's *Planets* suite.

W. H. SMITH'S BOOKSTALLS SELL World Film News

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

"Work Waits for You" (For Ministry of Labour)
By Alexander Shaw

Director of Productions
PAUL ROTHA

All directors employed by this Company are members of the Associated Realist Film Producers—an independent group representative of the leading documentary film makers in Great Britain

Managing Director
DONALD F. TAYLOR

"Stand by for Work" (For Ministry of Labour)
By Edgar Anstey

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THE WORLD IS FITZPATRICK'S COOKIE

Isaac James discusses THE KAVA KAVA SCHOOL OF TRAVELOGUE

"Pay your sixpence and see the world! Step right up, Ladies and Gentlemen, and examine the glories and splendours of foreign nations for no more than the cost of a glass of beer!"

This was the enticing offer that lured the suspicious customers into the Cinematograph Parlours of the early 1900's. These primitive movie fans, bent over their peep machines, were enraptured at the sight of a carriage drawing past the Eiffel Tower, or a tourist skirting the gardens of the Taj Mahal. Travel in those days was a means of escape reserved for the very wealthy, or the young man who went to sea. Films, on the other hand, provided an escape from the economic requirements of travel. Glamour, romance, exotic charms were promised by those flickering pictures. They were the shortest way out of Battersea.

In the thirty years of film history that have been written since those visionaries discussed "possibilities," the travel film sinks lower and lower on each page. True, it is occasionally used to augment the usual geography syllabus; we recognise the outline of New York's skyline much more quickly than we do a panorama of Liverpool, and we can tell the difference, vaguely, between a Tibetan and Melanesian. But somehow the "possibilities" were never realised; and to-day the promises are no longer made, not even by press agents.

In the Wardour Streets of the world the travel film is now contemptuously known as a "filler." It can be relied upon to keep the customers in their seats during the few minutes between Mickey Mouse and Myrna Loy; even though it cannot keep them from coughing and opening candy boxes.

The apparent causes for this decline of public interest in the travel picture are worth examining, because they are implicated in larger and more important film problems. Obviously, our desire to know more about the remote peoples and the places they inhabit has not lessened. Most Englishmen and Americans leap at every chance to go abroad. The tourist agencies of both countries are flourishing while the landlords are bewailing the depression. It would seem that the public wants to do its own travelling; and that desire may well be considered a devastating criticism of those who have been doing their travelling for them.

HIGH-SPEED METHODS

The largest and most pretentious organisation now producing in the travel field is a division of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Company. It is headed by Fitzpatrick, whose name is featured on every reel, and who personally supervises and works on every subject. The world is Fitzpatrick's cookie. No land, provided it is on the route of a commercial tourist company, is protected from his camera.

In recent years it has been his custom to book passage on one of Cunard's around-the-world-cruises, and while the natives of the various exotic ports do their little scenes for the culture-hungry and high-tipping tourists, Fitzpatrick records the scenes for posterity and the masses. Of course an occasional tourist, who has read a book, will wander off from the group and see something of the port itself, but Fitzpatrick hasn't time for such diversions, tripods being what they are to set up, and sunlight being such a furtive ally.

This high-speed, cover-the-world method of making travelogues has perhaps more imitators than all the others. We might call it the post-card school of motion-picture production. For never do these reels contain a single frame that would not be eminently suitable for sending back to Aunt Mary to let her know what a good time we are having, and how we wished she was here. All of the dullest movements, the most obvious native activities, the most glaring contrasts of "old and new," the fakiest and most moth-eaten folk ways are carefully photographed and presented as dramatic material.

The post-card school invariably has a stamp that authenticates its classification. During the last loving shot of the port, carefully framed by two palm leaves or a ship's life-preserver, you will hear the narrator's dulcet voice croon these words, "And so with mournful heart, we bid farewell to Kava Kava, but not for long, for we who have tasted the pleasures of this sun-kissed Garden of Eden know that some day we must return for a more substantial repast. Au revoir, Kava Kava!" The stamp is usually cancelled out by the yawns of the audience.

A system of travelogue production closely allied to the above is one that I affectionately think of as the art-study school. Most out-door film companies have at one time or another contributed little masterpieces to the vaults of this mythical institution. Their subject-matter is identical with that of the other group. The resulting difference is largely one of technique; for instead of making lovely pictures, these ambitious craftsmen strive after the unmitigated "beautiful." They are addicted to an extensive use of filters, and have a fearful ability to think up new camera angles.

The individual shots, if somewhat confusing, are always dramatic; sky is apt to be jet black, and the sand a rich silver grey; the close-up of the farmer's head usually looms so large on the screen that we feel we know more about the farmer's skin condition than his wife does. Such filmic treatment is likely to provide extremely intimate shots of the stone decoration of a sky-scraper and thrilling views from the fifty-second floor, but the simple person who wants to know what the skyscraper looks like is apt to be disappointed.

The simple person would certainly forgo his curiosity, however, if he only knew how much good the production of the art-study travelogue did to the ego of the film director. It's such fun to get away from dull commercial films that everybody can understand.

In the next issue, Isaac James will discuss Newman, "The Magic Carpet" series, the Martin Johnsons, etc.

ROBERT J. FLAHERTY IN INDIA

A PHOTO-MONTAGE FROM *ELEPHANT BOY*

What do Documentaries Cost?

Figures on Recent Films

How much do films like "Weather Forecast," "Contact," "B.B.C.," and "The Voice of Britain" cost? Here is a field of production which is interesting Government departments, public utility companies and industrial organisations. Production is inhibited because most of them are ignorant of the finances involved, and are afraid to trust the estimates of production companies.

"W.F.N." herewith supplies an analysis of the essential costs of this type of production.

Distinguish first the less-ambitious class of documentary. Basil Wright's West Indies films (*Cargo from Jamaica*, *Windmill in Barbados*, etc.), Shaw's films for the Orient (*Sea Change*, *Northern Summer*, etc.) and the G.P.O. non-theatrical films like *Air Post* are simple films—straight exteriors, no expensive lighting for interiors, no big set scenes, simple sound effects of commentary music, natural noise, etc. These films cost up to 10s. a foot. A one-reeler would not in the ordinary course cost more than £500.

Freak cases are *Granton Trawler*, *Fishing Banks of Skye* and *O'er Hill and Dale*. These films cost nearer £100 than £500. The explanation is that when you examine the shooting it is desperately simple. *Fishing Banks of Skye* was shot in one day, *Granton Trawler* in three days, *O'er Hill and Dale* in ten days. All the effects were got at the cutting bench. All were one-man shows, for the director acted as his own cameraman. The wastage of negative was trifling: fifteen hundred feet shot to one thousand feet finished film.

These are freak cases, and are not to be taken as a measure for more difficult subjects. You have different types of difficult subjects in *Weather Forecast*, *Contact*, *Face of Britain*, *Night Mail*, *Six-thirty Collection*, and *B.B.C.*

Weather Forecast involved shots taken from many locations, and similarly with *Contact* and *Face of Britain*. *Night Mail* involved night shooting, and expensive lighting crews, and a great deal of precise acting. *Six-thirty Collection* was entirely made in the interior of a sorting-office, and accommodation to the normal routine of the office made production slow.

B.B.C. from an organisational point of view was easily the most terrific undertaking documentary has ever faced. Production had to fit in with the very complex routine of the B.B.C.; illustrative shots had to be got from all over the country; the complex effects of sight (super-imposition, etc.) involved a great deal of special laboratory work; the sound involved complex re-recording of music, sound, commentary, natural sound, recitative, etc.; there were many special sets and many actors.

The range of cost here is from 10s. to 30s. a foot, with *B.B.C.* at the top. *Weather Forecast* was an exceptional film. It set out as a simple pot-boiler, but by extreme economy in production (Evelyn Spice is the most economical director operating in England) was able to do much more than was called for on the schedule. It cost about 7s. 6d. a foot, but this figure is exceptional and cannot rank as a standard.

Six-thirty Collection, which looks simpler than *Weather Forecast*, cost more than twice as much. *Night Mail*, *Contact* and *Shipyard* rank, one would say, in the £1 a foot class. £1 a foot is, in other words, a good measure for ambitious work, but that measure varies according to the circumstance. Thirty shillings a foot for first-rate work by the best directors is not too much.

There should be no confusion between Class A the simple class of *O'er Hill and Dale*, and Class B, the complex class of *Night Mail* and *Shipyard*.

NO-MAN'S-LAND OF FILM FINANCE

"W.F.N." asked the production supervisor of one of the large companies to say what sums were required in the ordinary way for studio films. He raises an interesting problem, pointing out that films for second-feature showing must be produced within a narrow limit, and that films for first-feature showing must have expensive stars, who carry production figures to freak totals.

Between the two figures is the no-man's-land of film finance.

Selling entertainment is mainly a matter of selling personalities. To sell a film as a first-feature, a producer must have a personality (or star) well enough known to induce the public to go to the particular theatres on whose screens that star is appearing. Such a star can demand and receive anything over £1,000 per week. But he also has his reputation to consider; so has the producer.

No star will hire himself to a producer who will not furnish him with an adequate story, supporting cast, director, technical staff and background. These, with studio and location work, will cost on an average, anything over £25,000. And so we reach the figure of £30,000 as the normal minimum cost of a first-feature film.

If a producer cannot afford that sum, he must aim at a second-feature production, for he cannot afford to hire a star, and therefore he cannot expect the general public to flock to his entertainment with no additional inducement on the programme. It has been generally established by experience that a second-feature film should not cost more than £15,000 and, if possible, not more than £12,000.

There is, therefore, a no-man's-land between £15,000 and £30,000 within which it is dangerous to trespass, unless abnormal conditions of economy in some departments make the hiring of a star possible within those limits. Sometimes, for instance, one or more stars will hire themselves co-operatively and agree to receive a percentage of the profits.

Productions costing more than £30,000 can roughly be scaled by the following means. The cost of the principal players should not be less than 25 per cent of the total cost of production, always remembering to hire those players as cheaply as possible. Productions costing more than £35,000 should have a strong potential appeal in more than one country.

The main danger in the present boom in film production in this country lies in the scarcity of screen personalities that will inevitably result from over-production. Certain stars are demanding double and treble the fees that they received a year ago. Some are worth the increase, many are not. But any increase should be assessed by box-office takings and not by competition among producers.

DAVID GASCOIGNE	-	*Man's Life is This Meat* - -	**3/6**
DYLAN THOMAS - -		*18 Poems* - - - -	**3/6**
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CARTOON COMES OF AGE
FROM FILL-UP TO FEATURE

Now that cartoon has taken its place in cinema programmes as a recognised and necessary feature, it is interesting to recall how they began.

Anson Dyer, author of the Sam cartoons, tells of their gradual evolution.

In 1915 the hand of the cartoonist always appeared on the screen. It merely drew lightning caricatures of politicians and well-known people or comic animals.

Most of these drawings were outlined first of all in a faint blue, which did not register on the film. This gave accuracy and speed to the cartoonist during the actual shooting. The speed worked out at about ⅛ inch per frame.

From this method a new technique evolved, called "ghost drawing." The cartoonist's hand disappeared, and the pictures evolved on their own. This was the simple technique of one-turn one picture, ⅛ inch being added to the drawing between shots.

This effect was improved by showing a hand drawing on one side of the screen, while another figure evolved all by itself on the other side. Meanwhile, exact replicas of the characters had been made, so that when the cartoonist's hand passed across the screen, his original drawing was removed, and the replica was placed there instead. The replica figures could now be animated and carry on the plot.

"*'Alt 'oo goes theer?*"

In this way the public was nursed into accepting an animated cartoon without seeing the artist's hand at work.

The animated figures just mentioned were "cut-outs"—that is, they were flat profiles cut out and elaborately jointed. It took about eight hours to walk a figure across the screen, and one slip would ruin an entire shot.

By 1918 the separate-drawing system had started. Each movement was drawn on a separate sheet of paper and photographed in a fixed position on a board in front of the camera. This was the forerunner of the present-day system of animation.

A motor-driven camera was evolved, worked by pressing a button, so that animation apparatus was simple enough for the cartoonist to do the whole job single-handed. But it took eight weeks to make an 800-foot cartoon.

The silent cartoon was now well-established, with international figures like "Felix" and tbe "Krazy Kat."

The next revolution was the sound cartoon, invented by Walt Disney. This gave many new possibilities and also complications.

There are two possible methods, pre-synchronising and post-synchronising. Pre-synchronisation is most generally used.

In this method, the sound is recorded first, and usually a synchronised visual track made of a real person carrying out the actions needed from the script.

This film is then charted picture by picture, and the musical or other beats carefully noted.

Key-draughtsmen make the most important drawings—usually about one in six. The intervening drawings are done by "in-between" draughtsmen.

Girls trace the drawings in ink on to celluloid sheets. For the average cartoon film, the whole drawing and tracing process is repeated about 15,000 times.

Nowadays most cartoons are in colour, which means that the celluloid tracings have to be painted. The key-artist mixes the colours for a given scene, and girl colourists colour the tracings on the reverse side, to avoid blotting out the ink-outlines.

The shot is then photographed by a mechanical camera, the results are edited, and the cartoon is complete.

ANSON DYER at work

My Friends of Yesterday
by Frank Tilley

Frank Tilley, editor of "Kinematograph Weekly" from 1918 to 1924, British film representative for American "Variety" from 1924 to 1928, founder editor of the official C.E.A. journal, "Cinematograph Times" from 1928 to 1930, Radio's general manager of publicity and advertising from 1930 to 1936, is now editor of "The London Reporter."

The lamented death of Herman Fellner recalls the intriguing and exciting days of immediate post-war Continental films, especially the German and the Swedish. And as they come to me, these memories are jotted down.

Sometime in 1920, on "information received," mainly from Geneva, I deduced that an attempt was being made to form an American-German-Italian film pact. Carl Bratz, then head of the Deutsche Bank, was in it somewhere, and presently I heard that he was in London. Telephone calls produced no replies, and eventually I sent him a wire: "'Phone Gerrard 9870," or whatever was the then telephone number of the *Kinematograph Weekly*, which I was editing.

Soon after lunch came a knock on my door, and a large and worried-looking man entered, waving the telegram, and telling me he was Herr Fellner, and for what did I want him to see me?

A luncheon appointment with him and Bratz next day produced all the information I needed from short, frog-like, monocled Bratz, whose queerest characteristic was that he scarcely ever took his eyes from the ground. I discovered a psychological reason for this later, but that doesn't matter here.

Later in the year I again met Fellner in Berlin. He then had studios at Wannsee, and Joe May was making pictures for him. So boyishly enthusiastic they both were, so full of ideas, and so naïve about them. In Fellner's office in Tauntzienstrasse I saw them estimating the width of a proposed set by measuring round the wall of the office with May's cane, to a joint chant of "Eine stockelange, zwei stockelange" and so on, to the requisite ocular idea.

At that time I had just come from Stockholm, enticed there by the one or two Swedish pictures I had seen in London. The outcome was that, literally, I introduced Sjöstrom and Stiller to the English-speaking world, which incidentally led to the American "discovery" of Garbo.

Later, when on my persistent belief in and praise of Swedish pictures, Sjöstrom got his Culver City contract, I theorised on its artistic effect on his work. Of its financial benefit there was no doubt. Two or three years afterwards, when I had seen him in Hollywood at work, and had written him still later from London a reproachful letter or two, he replied with the cynical but understandable assertion that "one does not spit in one's soup."

Stiller's first visit to London—a treacherous memory suggests that it was in 1921—brought out all the Newfoundland puppy in him—and always he reminded me of nothing so much, especially when he was excitedly pleased. Outside the London Pavilion he grabbed the whole contents of a flower-seller's tray of violets and pressed them on my wife and a companion, as we were on our way to the Stoll Picture Theatre Club, a famous gathering in those days of film fans, who later were the only organised body to give Valentino a reception when he came from New York with me for his first visit to London. Garbo, at the time of Stiller's visit, was so unknown outside Scandinavia that Stiller came to the reception alone.

COCKALORUM

WHAT THE STARS SAY:

"A green salad a day is all I want. I never eat. Really I don't."

Carole Lombard.

"The man I am going to marry is about ten or fifteen years older than I am, and tremendously intellectual—that's what I want now. I want peace."

Pola Negri.

"Physically I am not equipped to mingle."

Paul Muni.

"Sometimes I wonder how I can stand myself."

Clark Gable.

"I have given away a hell of a lot of diamonds."

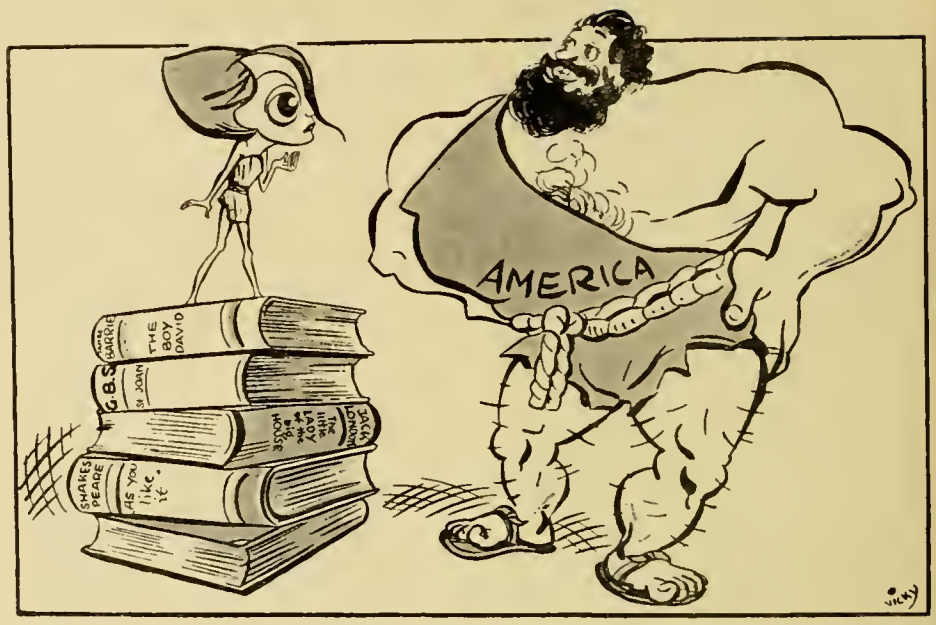
John Barrymore.

"I could make love just as convincingly to a pillow as to the charming ladies who have been my heroines."

Warner Baxter.

"Any language is easy if you know music."

Luise Rainer.



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The Girl David

Secretary of Board of Film Censors and Chairman of Public Morality Council interview deputation of Film Stars on subject of subversive propaganda films

---

"I'm pretty fond of most American men I've met, and I'd like to meet a few Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Germans, Italians and some others to sort of compare them."

Mae West.

"If you can take the actor out of motion pictures, pictures will be better."

Frank Capra.

"I'm an advocate of moderation. For example, I never drink before breakfast."

W. C. Fields.

"Like Greta Garbo, my first job was in a barber's shop."

Jimmy Durante.

IDEAL HOMES EXHIBITION

A baroque feature is a series of "Rooms of the Film Stars," who apparently order their furnishings *en bloc* from London firms. There are some surprises: Mr. Raymond Massey's dining-room strikes us as very vulgar, while Mr. Cecil B. de Mille's drawing-room is quiet and refined. The most beautiful room is Mr. Leslie Howard's kitchen. Miss Mae West's bedroom has a mirror on the ceiling over the bed.

The New Statesman.

CROSS EYES

G. K. Spoor—the Ess of Essanay—tells one of Ben Turpin in his reminiscences. The scene is the old Essanay lot in Chicago.

Spoor watches Ben come from the studio, cross over to the cemetery which runs alongside carrying a bunch of the famous white lilies. He crosses the wall and makes his way carefully to one of the graves. He sets the lilies down as accurately as his cross eyes permit.

Spoor is affected. "That's a nice idea," he says to Ben, "I hope always when you have lilies left over from the set you will put them on one of these graves."

Ben is less affected. "You've got it wrong, Boss," he says, "that's where I got 'em."

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* * *

In America, M.G.M. releases a film as the *Perfect Gentleman*; in England the same picture is distributed as *The Imperfect Lady*.

* * *

Jack Oakie has it figured out that Baby LeRoy, last of the old Paramount guard, will get one of the dressing-rooms vacated by Mae West and Marlene Dietrich.

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JUNE 1936

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AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

VOL. 1 NO. 3 INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY MONTHLY

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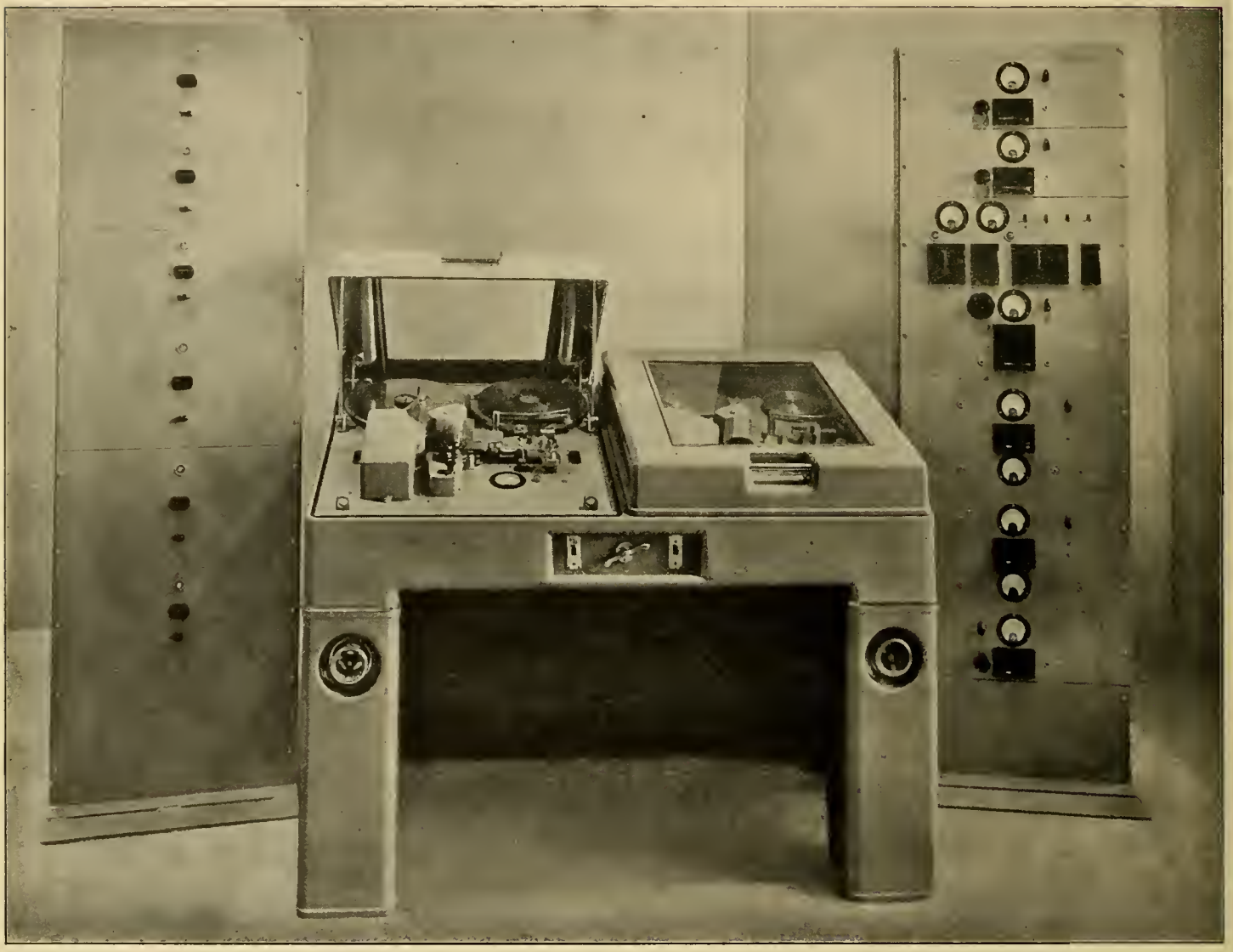

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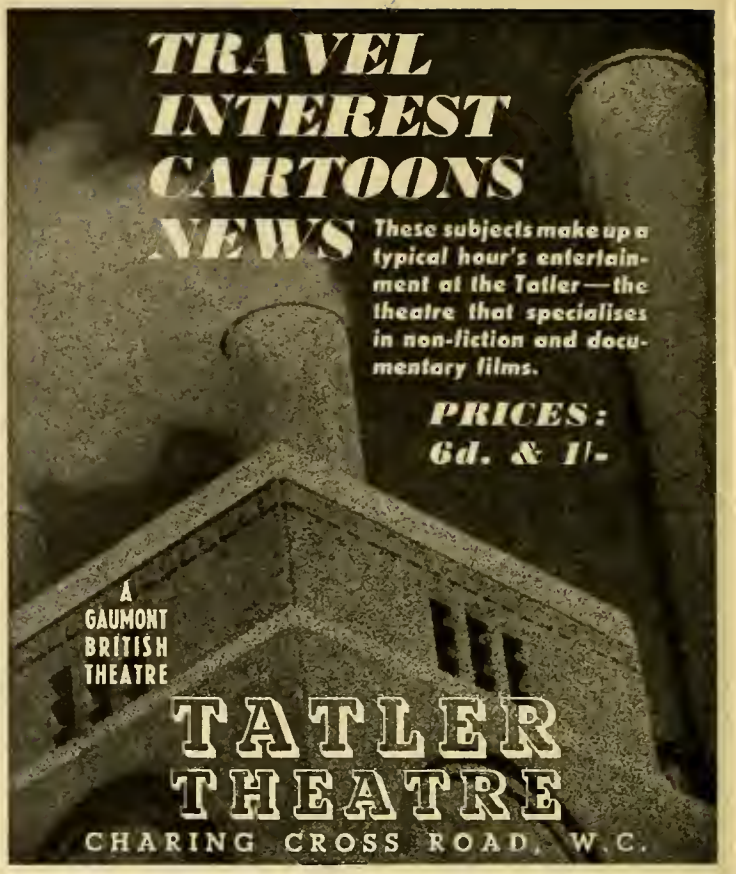

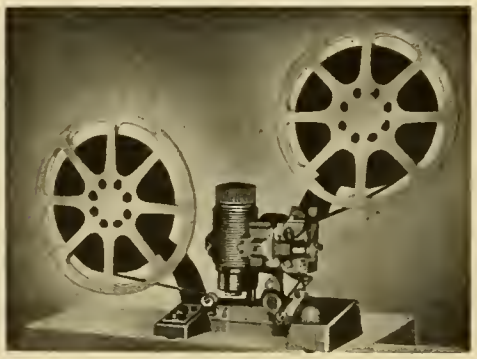

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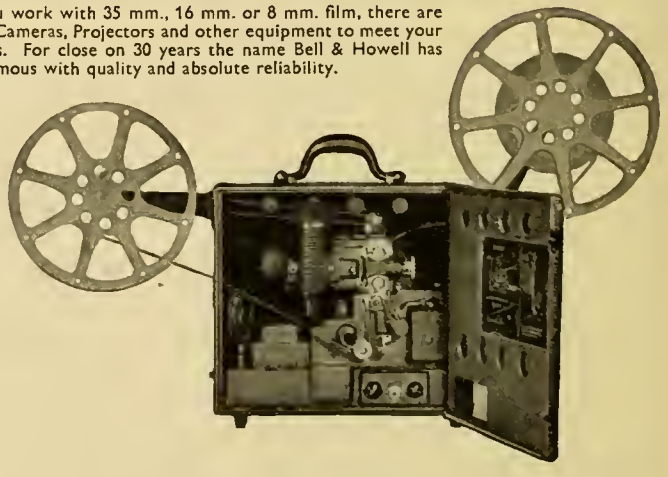

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THIRD NUMBER Editor H. N. FELD. Associate Editor NORMAN WILSON. JUNE 1936

GRACIE'S ARTISTRY REFLECTS PSYCHOLOGY OF THE MASSES

by Joanna Macfadyen

GRACIE FIELDS, the unique professional amateur, is not an actress: she is a single-personality act. She gives unvarying performances of herself pleasing herself, and ten million English men and women so fully share her taste in humour, songs, dress and social outlook that, by her films alone (largely in the North of England) she earns more per picture than any Hollywood star.

Her films, music-hall appearances and radio performances all dramatise for this particular, and exclusively English audience their ideal of high spirits, and the "good sort": the hearty, reliable person without irony or wit—a favourite character in England with which hordes of English identify themselves.

Spare Time Fairy

Her clothes are chosen by herself; she owns a mid-twentieth century baronial hall near Brighton and a villa at Capri, and runs a children's home out of her own pocket, much of the money being the proceeds of her photograph used for advertising purposes.

The majority of her audience would do and have all these things if they were a Gracie Fields. These things spell for them comfort, glamour (undefined), and the satisfaction of the enormous British capacity for the true-fairy-story sentimentality, Babes in the Wood and all. She has worked hard all her life (her audience understand hard work), and she is generous to a degree. These human links are a strong bond with her thousands of fans.

Home Made and Wholesome

She is always "U" certificate; her jokes are for entire families. They do not ask for good singing, they want *songs*, and these are written strictly to her taste, and are generally overflowing with some form of self-pity. Gracie knows to a split second when to dissolve the self-pity into the British "grin-and-bear-it" mood.

These people do not care what the west end of London likes for its entertainment. American jazz and singers? Haughty stars in white ermine, floating through beige palaces? Lubitsch? (Garn!) Gracie's act, in whichever medium she appears, puts the men in a hearty family mood (no vicarious illicit love affairs here), the women adore her (they share her dress taste, there are no envious wish-fulfilments; nor are wrecked marriages the basis of her entertainment), and the children enjoy the general racket.

Epitome of Wakes

She is the apotheosis of all the pleasure of their annual week's holiday from the mills; the clown member (of any family) who can be relied on to chase away the blues. She was a mill girl, and now she has made good, and, still one of them, she cajoles and marshals them into solid ranks of idolisers who invest their pennies in her personality, and understand and like what they get.

She is a product of the English industrial revolution; the entertainer who knows all about the seamy side of the lives of her kind, but, probably unconsciously, shares with them the philosophy of doing anything, even singing nonsense sadly, rather than thinking angrily, and probably impotently, on the why and how of their colourless everyday.

MUSIC HALL FAVOURITE WHO SPONSORS ART FILMS

GRACIE FIELDS' real name was Stansfield. Born 1898 in Rochdale, Lancashire. At the age of thirteen sang in the local cinema; and later, in an attempt to "get on the stage," repeated this performance outside an actors' boarding house. Unsuccessful, she became a mill-hand. Eventually attached herself to a small touring revue (in which Archie Pitt was the principal comedian) and from this she and Archie Pitt toured their own *It's a Bargain* in the north of England for two and a half years, followed by *Mr Tower of London*, which ran for 4,000 performances without a break. She then toured in Archie Pitt's productions, *By Request* (three years), *The Show's the Thing* (which included a year in London), and *Walk This Way*.

Made First Film in 1931

Her first film, *Sally in Our Alley*, was made in 1931. Thereafter *Looking on The Bright Side* (1932), *This Week of Grace* (1933), *Love, Life and Laughter* (1934), *Sing as We Go* (1934), *Look Up and Laugh* (1935), and *Queen of Hearts* (1935).

Last year she financed the production of *Riders to The Sea.*

FILMS OF REAL LIFE PAY SAYS WILL HAYS' REPORT

By F. D. Klingender

Advance notices of this year's report prepared by Will H. Hays for the directors of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, stress the remarkable note of optimism and praise for the achievements of the industry that characterises this document.

"The new standards of artistry attained by the screen this year," the report states, "are a tribute to the creative personnel of the industry.

"Conclusions reached by competent critics and commentators of the Press are to the effect that there is more intellectual distinction in the movies than ever before;

"That the new productions have exceeded in quality the most optimistic hopes;

"That pictures of historical significance are ever on the increase; that the screen has shown its ability to portray the highest concepts of the human mind. . . .

"That *honest and compelling themes are predominating in the outstanding pictures.* . . .

"And that the industry is performing a great experiment that will help to determine whether the screen is the universal entertainment medium for the expression of the highest forces of art and drama."

The outstanding fact about this judgment, the general justness of which is scarcely open to doubt, is that ever since the problems of real life forced their way on to the screens in the heat of the recent crisis, the old, utterly irrelevant, penny-dreadful type of film no longer pays. The great mass of picture-goers demand themes that are in some way related to their own experience and give expression to their aspirations.

Attempts to return to the pre-crisis "escape" film have proved an utter failure. A careful study of the different types of picture-goers and their characteristic feelings and desires is now an essential preliminary for successful production.

Yet at the same time:

"The question of public order, of public good, of avoiding the inflammatory, the prejudicial or the subversive, is a problem of social responsibility everlastingly imposed upon those who would produce, distribute and exhibit pictures to a universal audience of 80,000,000 men, women and children in the United States alone. The distinction between pictures with a message and self-serving propaganda which misrepresents the purpose of the entertainment screen, is one determinable through the processes of common sense."

Here, then, to the criterion of honesty and the compelling force of artistic truth is added the American censor's criterion of public order and public good. It is clear that these two sets of criteria need not necessarily always coincide. Many pictures of the highest integrity and truthfulness will be beyond the censor's conception of public good.

Nor is that all: this latter conception itself is not a constant quantity; it changes with the changing political situation, and in the event of a move towards greater political reaction there can be no doubt that many films that would now be allowed to pass, would be rejected.

Thus the success of the experiment that will determine, in the words of Will Hays, whether the screen is "the universal medium for the expression of the highest forces of art and drama" depends not on the artistic personnel of the film industry alone. It depends to a large extent on the general trend of political and social events and on the degree to which the powers in control of the industry align themselves with the forces opposed to the interest of the great mass of picture-goers.

But since it is now demonstrated beyond question that the most successful pictures are the most truthful ones, it follows with equal certainty that, if there is a trend towards greater reaction and if the film executives side with the forces of that reaction, they will undermine the very basis of integrity and truthfulness that alone can make the film a medium for the highest forces of art and drama.

The degree to which the American film industry can succeed in attaining the level of artistic quality to which it aspires and on which its economic success depends, is thus seen to be contingent on the degree of freedom allowed to a genuine expression of the feelings and aspirations of the great mass of the people under the conditions of American capitalism.

MICHAEL BALCON, director of productions of the G.B. Film Corporation, entered the film industry in 1922. Before this he was secretary to the General Manager of the Dunlop Rubber Company.

"Mick," as he is known to everyone in the industry, started his film career with his own company, "Film Advertising Services." Later he founded Balcon, Freedman & Saville to make "Woman to Woman" at the old Paramount Studios, Islington.

Next, he formed Gainsborough Pictures, taking over the Islington Studios completely.

With the formation of the G.B. group he was invited to become, not only a director of the company, but director of productions as well. He will be forty on May 19th.

G.B. Goes International

By Michael Balcon

The growth of the film industry in this country during the past few years, and the welcome extended to British pictures, not only in our own Dominions but in the vast American market, have proved beyond doubt that in order to progress still further we must pursue a production policy ever less and less parochial and more and more international in appeal. "Internationalisation" sums up G.B. policy.

This we are trying to bring about in a number of ways. For some time past I have made frequent journeys to America, where I have signed up not only famous film artistes, but also writers and directors; arrangements have also been made for certain American producers, with whom I have entered into what amounts to an "exchange of talent" system, to obtain the services of the finest representatives of our own studio roster.

You will see this policy manifested in films on our present production schedule. *The Great Divide*, based on incidents during the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, with Richard Arlen heading the cast; *Seven Sinners*, a story of a gang of gun-runners, with Edmund Lowe and Constance Cummings; *Secret Agent*, with Madeleine Carroll, Robert Young and Peter Lorre; *It's Love Again*, in which Robert Young plays leading-man to Jessie Matthews, whose popularity in America is tremendous; *Soldiers Three*, for which Victor MacLaglen is shortly paying us a visit from Hollywood.

These, and many more, are conceived, written, cast and produced with constant thought, from first to last, of our ultimate aim; and that is to produce pictures with the greatest possible appeal to the greatest possible audiences in all parts of the world.

Furthermore, we now have our own distributing organisation in America; and the success shown by their efforts, after little more than a year's existence, proves beyond any doubt that the policy of "Internationalisation" is the right one.

Stars from the States

American audiences have shown that they are eager for British pictures. They appreciate the fresh angles on life which we present to them; the letters from admirers in the United States received by our artistes—generally most constructive and intelligent, these letters—prove that British players can easily gain the affection of the American film-going public. But the quickest way in which to popularise our artistes and productions in America is undoubtedly by the inclusion of established American favourites in our casts, as well as the expenditure throughout every stage of production of much careful thought on the modifications and "twists" of treatment which will most appeal to audiences outside this country.

Robeson finds Human Story of Negro Freedom in Slave Legend

By HARRY WATT

Paul Robeson, who is now working on his new film, *Song of Freedom*, feels that in it he is representing the negro race and overcoming the colour prejudice. He feels this not because he is conceited, but because he realises he is the most publicised negro in the world.

It was only because the film presents negroes as ordinary human beings, and not the caricatures they are invariably shown in American films, that Robeson consented to make it. He has turned down many offers because he felt they did not show the negro in a sympathetic light.

The story of *The Song of Freedom*, Paul Robeson's new film now being made at Beaconsfield by Hammer Productions, is based on an African legend told to Robeson by Major Claude Wallace when they were working together on *Sanders of the River*. Robeson, although he has never been to Africa, is a keen student of the folk-lore and history of the African people. He was very interested, so Major Wallace and Miss Dorothy Holloway, one of the casting directors of London Films, made a scenario of it.

It tells of an African queen who was in the pay of the Portuguese in the slaving days. Her tribe find her out and kill her. Her son and his wife fly up to the Portuguese, taking with them the carved disc worn only by the chief. The Portuguese callously sell them into slavery, but always their descendants hand down the disc, not knowing its significance. Robeson is discovered as the last descendant, a labourer in Cardiff docks, still with the royal disc. He sings to a queue, is heard by an impresario, becomes famous, learns the story of the disc from an anthropologist when at the height of his success, and giving up everything, goes to Africa to look after his people.

On the set Robeson dominates everything. Not only because of his size and dignity, but because of the sincerity he puts into his acting. Off the set Robeson is always willing to talk at length on his screen personality.

Despite many criticisms, Robeson has always believed his previous film appearances have done something for the negro. American negroes were furious at him wearing a leopard skin and "going savage" in *Sanders of the River*. Robeson's answer is that he did it to show that the negro, in appearance and demeanour, is the same all over the world.

Robeson, who recently had long conversations about film technique with Eisenstein and Pudovkin in Russia, has an ambition to make a film of the history of one of the great African peoples, like the Basutos. What a King Prempeh he would make! But let him beware that it doesn't become just another piece of "far-flung" stuff! Mr. Robeson's ideals are apt to get lost in the rough-and-tumble of the film studio.

Paul Robeson still cannot quite realise why all the fuss is made about him. The proudest moment of his life was when certain student bodies at Edinburgh University asked him to stand as their representative for Lord Rector. He refused at once through sheer embarrassment! But he felt deeply honoured. As he said, "I guess it made me feel that I had more than just a voice and a face and weighed two hundred pounds. It was sure nice of those boys."

Song of Freedom will be finished in a month's time. Mr. Robeson intends to stand by during the cutting period to safeguard the story as much as possible. Then he hopes to start on his greatest adventure. His first visit to Africa! Luckily, he realises now that many illusions will be shattered. But in such institutions as the University of Accra he hopes to find the bright promise of Africa's future.

Beast or Bird? Censor on Mae West

By GWYN LEWIS
in "SUNDAY EXPRESS"

Major Harding de Fonblanque Cox, known to intimates as "Cockie," appointed at the age of eighty-one by Lord Tyrrell, film censor, to act as assistant reader of scripts, raised a warning finger.

He said: "I shall preserve a perfectly open mind, but I will not countenance vulgarity. No, my boy, let us show clean films in the old country."

His enthusiasm grew as he continued, "I shall judge film stories as I would horse-flesh or a dog. I shall look for clean lines."

Major Harding Cox, educated at Harrow and Cambridge, a former M.F.H., life member of the Garrick and Leander clubs, authority on fishing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, spoke of Mae West.

He also spoke of the survival of the soul, his conviction that the aura lives on after death, and his grave doubts whether the ego survives.

But Mae West came first.

He said: "I am a man of the world, a broad-minded fellow, and they used to say I was a good judge of women. Personally, I think Mae is interesting as a curiosity, but, as I say, I shall judge her as I would a horse, er . . . er . . . or, say, a fox terrier. You know I founded the Fox Terrier Club. I shall look for good clean lines."

He said: "I fall fast asleep if I try to work during the day, but can tackle any mortal thing at 4 a.m. I suffer from 'lethargica' inherited from my father. Lord Tyrrell understands my disability."

Major Cox adds: "When Mr. Glyn Lewis says I cannot keep awake, he has me all wrong, as they say in Hollywood. It is only when I am engaged in serious reading or writing that I am apt to be troubled with a peculiar form of 'lethargica,' probably due to eye-strain."

DISCOVERED WAGON

Arrow marks the spot

Reading in the "Daily Telegraph" the other day that the Museum of Modern Art in New York could not find a single copy of "The Covered Wagon" in all America, "W.F.N." thought it just too bad, and decided to do something about it.

As the result of their investigations they have found in London not only a shortened version still in use, but a duplicated negative!

The negative can be found at School Road, Acton. We give this information free to all Film Museums and collectors.

MEETINGS AND ACQUAINTANCES

ST. DENIS, imperturbable founder of the Compagnie des Quinze, is the star pupil of Jacques Copeau, director of the Vieux Colombier.

Both master and pupil are concerned with the dramatisation of legend and fairy-tale, and their projects are accordingly better suited to the stage than to the screen.

This explains the collapse of St. Denis's recent film contacts with Laughton, Clair and the G.P.O. Film Unit, and also accounts for his hopes of success on the English stage.

JACOBY, quixotic American director, who produced "Little Ol' Boy" and Sinclair Lewis' "Jay Hawker" in New York, is a strong believer in the realist method; after his studio experiences he prefers handling real people and natural material.

Asked what he had been doing in the States, he replied that he was a horse-thief.

GEORGES PERINAL, French ace-cameraman, has returned from his holiday to shoot the Korda-Laughton version of the life of Rembrandt.

Remembering the difficult bearing of some of his colleagues, one marvels that Perinal, gentle to a degree of timidity, has managed to carry his reputation through the superficial glories of his trade. His secret is that his only ambition is to remain a cameraman.

In the London studios Perinal is known as a man of few words. He compensates for his lack of English by an eloquent language of technical gestures.

MARGERY LOCKETT, public relations chief of G.B. Equipments, is one of the old stagers on the distribution side of educational films.

In her long association with Bruce Woolfe (stretching back to the British Instructional days) she has distributed films of almost every subject in the school curriculum, from natural history to solid geometry. Her latest job is to distribute film lessons to King Peter of Jugo-Slavia.

SZIGETI, one of the world's three greatest violinists, has a quality unusual in virtuosi; he takes a very intelligent interest not only in the theory but the practice of the other arts.

He is anxious to make a documentary film on the technique of violin playing, but so far has been unable to get finance for it (*sic*). He believes very rightly that it would be box-office as well as interesting.

Early Screen Masterpieces Discovered in London Cellar

Buried away in cellars in Clark's Mews, near Shaftesbury Avenue, London, a veteran of the film industry works surrounded by one of the greatest collections of early films still existent. As you move from cellar to cellar you fall over films of John Bunny, Mary Pickford when she was the Biograph Girl, Charlie Chaplin and early Italian epics.

This veteran is Mr. F. H. Arton, F.Z.S., who has been in the business since 1900. Starting at the Crystal Palace with slides of the Boer War for Lieut.-Col. Bromhead, he soon progressed to films, and assisted at the People's Palace, Mile End.

Seeing the possibilities, he then bought a Prestwich projector and launched out on his own. Armed with twenty films, from 50 to 100 feet long, bought from a barrow in Farringdon Market, he started to tour the country. His first show, November 9th, 1900, at the Town Hall, Alton, Hants., was a flop.

The house was crowded at a penny a time, and as the Boer War scenes flickered across the screen, martial music blared from a cylindrical gramophone record. Behind the scenes, Mr. Arton was gingerly controlling the supplies of oxygen and hydrogen gas that were the light source.

Suddenly the film went out of rack. There was no racking handle. The only thing to do was to stop the projector and adjust the film. But, unfortunately, as soon as the machine stopped the film burst into flames! Luckily no one was injured, but the Alton Town Council stepped in, and Mr. Arton moved on.

For many years he toured the country with his films, and unlike most exhibitors did not "junk" them. So he gradually accumulated his present vast store.

They have lain neglected by the film world for many years. Only when an occasion like the King's Jubilee comes along does Mr. Arton find his premises invaded by Wardour Street. Most of the early scenes of King George and King Edward in the Jubilee films were obtained from the Clarks' Mews vaults.

Almost too late, it has been realised that the early films are of value. At present working with Mr. Arton is Mr. E. H. Lindgren, of the British Film Institute. Going through tin after tin with the eagerness and care of an archæologist, Mr. Lindgren is finding museum pieces for the National Film Library. Already early Keystone, Essanay, Vitaphone and Biograph classics have been found.

"FILM PRODUCTION"

With an Introduction by Alexander Korda

With his first book, "Filmcraft," Mr. Brunel performed a service to film production; it is still the most authoritative and lucid exposition of cinematic art, and it has the additional merit of being witty. In his new work he takes the student further and with the same gentle and happy encouragement. His advice is always stimulating and practical. At a time when Mr. Brunel was making a series of satirical films, he was described as the "Leacock of the Screen." Although he has apparently abandoned that role, the description seems prophetic; Stephen Leacock is a Professor of McGill University and Adrian Brunel is rapidly qualifying for a Chair of Cinematography. CONTENTS: Technique; Movement and Sound; Inspiration; Originality; Ambition; Treatment; The Right Angle; Clothes; Acting; Set Economy; Cost, Adventuring; Cruising; Reflectors; Art Direction; Assistant Direction; The Associate Producer; Casting; The Continuity Girl; Dialogue; Editing; Hairdressing for the Screen; Make-up; Screen Treatment; This Sound Business; Christian Names, etc., etc.

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ADRIAN BRUNEL

Catholic Agency uses Press as Film Censorship Weapon

That the Pope exercises a film censorship is strongly claimed by recent articles in the Austrian, German and Czecho-slovakian Press.

DOCIP, a Press service formed in Brussels by the Action Catholique du Film, is stated to be the organisation through which the Vatican censorship is disseminated to the faithful.

Religious partisanship tends to exaggerate the importance of DOCIP in this direction, but an investigation by W.F.N.'s Brussels correspondent reveals some significant facts regarding the cinematic activities of the Catholic Church.

DOCIP (Documentation Cinématographique du Presse) is a direct offspring of the Action Catholique du Cinéma, which has no objection to the cinema in general, but which fights against all films considered deleterious from the Catholic point of view. It also attempts to encourage better films. Its activities give no reason to suppose that there is a Papal Index of films (similar to that of books), or that there is any form of direct censorship from the Vatican.

DOCIP was formed because the influencing of the Press is considered to be one of the surest means of attaining the objects of the Action Catholique du Film. The Press can influence both producer and consumer.

The directors of DOCIP, Father Morlion and M. R. Lutyen, have got together a group of journalists writing in French, Dutch and German, all of whom specialise on films.

Critics' Card-Index

They have at their disposal an information bureau. This includes a card-index classification of films, which gives, in addition to technical details, a criticism of each film from the moral, artistic and box office points of view. There is also a library of biographical notes on all film personalities, a huge collection of books, periodicals and Press cuttings from all the European countries and the U.S.A., together with many stills, negatives, and blocks.

DOCIP distributes a weekly guide called *Cinésélection* (*Filmleidung* in Dutch, *Filmfuhrung* in German). It contains a list of all the films running in towns or districts classified under the four headings of "U," "A," "Be Careful" (*i.e.*, dangerous for the masses, but possibly all right for balanced or forewarned persons), and finally "Forbidden."

By local tie-ups, DOCIP can ensure the entrée for these judgments into local papers at least a day before the appearance of the films in question.

Moreover, its information is sufficiently useful to the Press in general to make it welcome. At present it is used by some sixty papers or magazines, not only in Belgium but in other countries.

Relations between DOCIP and the Trade have not been continuously friendly. At Antwerp cinema owners demanded that the papers should not publish adverse DOCIP criticisms in the same issues as their own publicity matter.

His Holiness

Fearing loss of advertisements two papers cancelled the DOCIP service, whereupon DOCIP wrote to the Antwerp Exhibitors threatening a total boycott to be carried out through the local churches, public meetings, circulars to Catholics, Press correspondence, and all other possible means.

It is generally felt, however, in Catholic circles that DOCIP is not so strong as it claims, and that the ecclesiastical authorities dare not lend their support to such violent action.

In any case, the Action Catholique has, through DOCIP, gained a great measure of control over the cinemas.

It is not unlikely that it will now consider the question of entering the production field, although at present no action has been taken.

We are disappointed

That *Steamboat Round the Bend* did not get a London showing.

That the quality of recent Disneys has been so poor.

That the *March of Time* has not yet turned its attention to the depressed areas.

That we see so few Russian films nowadays.

That *Whom the Gods Love* (*The Life of Mozart*) has been put on in Paris but not in London.

That the programmes of Radio Luxembourg are not as amusing as the advertisers' announcements in the intervals.

RECIPE FOR AN EPIC by ALEXANDER POPE

W.F.N. is proud to announce that it has called in the services of Mr. Alexander Pope (1688-1744), whose smashing box-office success, "The Rape of the Lock" makes any statement from him of the utmost importance to scenario departments working on historical stories.

Mr. POPE writes:

"Take out of any old poem, history book, romance or legend, those parts of the story which afford scope for long descriptions. Put these pieces together and throw all the adventures you fancy into one tale. Then take a hero whom you may choose for the sound of his name and put him into the midst of these adventures."

"TO MAKE AN EPISODE"

"Take any remaining adventures of your former collection, in which you could in no way involve your hero; or any unfortunate accident that was too good to be thrown away; and it will be of use applied to any other person."

"MANNERS"

"For those of the hero, take all the best qualities you can find in the celebrated heroes of antiquity. However, do not absolutely observe the exact quantity of these virtues, it not being determined whether or no it be necessary to the hero to be an honest man. When you cannot extricate your hero by any human means, or yourself by your own wits, seek relief from heaven, and the gods will do your business very readily."

"LANGUAGE"

"You may give the venerable air of antiquity to your piece by darkening up and down with Old English. With this you may be easily furnished on any occasion by the dictionary commonly printed at the end of Chaucer."

We hope

That the news-reel companies will not untie the bonds of friendship they achieved in the aerial shooting of the Cup Final.

That Charles Laughton will enjoy being Rembrandt-lit in the forthcoming Korda film.

That Mr. Wells's next scenario will deal with present-day problems.

That the B.B.C. will follow up their "Meistersinger" programme with other full-length opera broadcasts.

That Lord Tyrrell managed to see the Peace Film at his local cinema.

TELEVISION MUST CONTACT THE INDIVIDUAL

Consider the radio services and the radio audiences now served. To the general audience the B.B.C. gives:

1. Respite from labour and a substitute for cinema.
2. Information on the events of the day.
3. A contact with London and a sense of being in the know.

To more specialised audiences the B.B.C. gives:

4. Education for the purposes of self improvement.
5. Education for purposes of civic improvement (often called propaganda).
6. Sectional services in music, education and information.

Where Radio beats Films

On this analysis radio performs a much wider and, in fact, a greater community service than film. Film does (1) brilliantly; fails dismally on (2) and (3); shuns (4); but is already, in documentary and instructional films, highly equipped for the performance of (5) and (6). The difference is interesting. On news and public affairs, and even on metropolitan gossip for the general audience, radio scores heavily, but it has authority. It really is in the know, and the people trust its knowledge.

Film Technique no Guide

If television follows B.B.C. trodition and proctice, it is clear that only in services (1), (5) *and* (6) *will it find a guide in cinema* (*i.e., in entertainment, documentary and instructional films*). *For the other services of authoritative news, intimate interview and public improvement, it will have to create its own technique.*

The Rational Appeal

In close conjunction with these various services there is a difference in mood between film audiences and radio audiences.

The film audience is large, subject to crowd psychology, imposed upon, *i.e.*, disciplined, by every trick of mass presentation. Publicity and showmanship create a glamour around stars and romances. *The atmosphere of the film theatre is one of escape.*

The radio audience is small, informal, intimate and essentially undisciplined. The radio has to win its way through a hundred distractions. *The radio audience must be talked over and won on the merits of the material if it is to be held.*

The radio appeal is, therefore, more rational; it is to the individual and his good sense. It is more informal and, except on exceptional occasions like the King's death, cannot build on a ready-made tenseness of atmosphere. Its art will, therefore, incline to the more ordinary and experiment may not pass too far from conversational level. It depends on a quick interest in the subject matter—unless the full forces of publicity be used to create a special interest. Here again the radio must depend on ready-made interest. *It thrives, therefore, on the traditional, on the news of the day; it follows up rather than originates.*

News-value later

This suggests the need for a conservative policy in television. On the other hand the B.B.C.'s monopoly of authority and the belief that it really is in the know can be exploited further. Intimate interview and authoritative comment might be made the basic factor in the creation of a new style of reporting.

Against the film's glamour of showmanship the radio has the glamour of immediacy. This the newspapers had occasion to note when the King's death was announced. Television will, no doubt, in this matter seek the same immediacy as the microphone to-day, but not for some time. There is interest and not art in immediate things. The hotter the news-reels, the more foolish they are. No doubt it will be the same with television but the hot news will serve its evanescent purpose.

Moral as usual

But whatever the limitations of the medium in terms of informality, intimacy, etc., the usual aesthetic rules will obtain. *All arts are built by exploiting their limitations.*

BROADCAST OF "CAVALCADE" GIVES SCOPE TO FELTON

by Grace Wyndham Goldie

LOOK OUT for an adaptation of *Cavalcade* which Felix Felton is making, and which is going to be produced about June 22nd. Mr. Felton has already given us some highly successful experimental programmes. His historical reconstruction, "Sedgemoor" was marked by a unity of form and feeling rare in these things; his biographical sketch of De Quincey had a curious and unusual flavour which suited the subject. Both programmes owed much to an imaginative use of music. And it is just because Mr. Felton believes strongly in the importance of music in broadcast plays, and experiments with it freely, that everything he handles holds out a promise of freshness.

Music is so important to broadcast drama that any attempt to find new ways of using it must be valuable. It can link the action, provide a substitute for settings and costume, give us, as in "Sedgemoor," the effect of a battle, and, as in "Gallipoli," conjure up a vision of great ships moving out to sea. Above all, when finely used it can create for us the emotional values of a scene more surely than sight.

The loose form of *Cavalcade* offers Mr. Felton scope. His adaptation will give us a chance of comparing the stage, film and broadcast handling of the same story.

B.B.C. EVENTS OF THE MONTH

The Outside Broadcasts Department have arranged to cover the following national events: Wimbledon, Hendon, The Derby, The Queen Mary.

Arrangements have been made to relay from Covent Garden a certain number of operas during the present season, which opened on April 27th and continues till June 12th. The season is under the artistic direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. The London Philharmonic Orchestra will play at all performances.

May 19th, Mid.—Variety of Theatres: The New Theatre, Northampton.

May 22nd, Welsh—Recital of Penillion Singing.

May 23rd, West—West Country Calendar.

May 25th, Reg.—A Cheapjack looks at the Derby.

May 27th, Nat. and Reg.—*The Derby. Commentary by R. C. Lyle and W. Hobbiss.

May 31st, Nat.—*Piano Recital (Borowsky).

May 31st, Reg.—*B.B.C. Orchestra (B), conductor: Adrian Boult, with Men's Chorus. Wagner's "Love Feast of the Apostles."

June 1st, Nat.—This Time Last Year.

June 2nd, Nat.—*Kitchener (radio biography), producer: L. Gilliam.

June 2nd, Nat.—Down to the Sea in Ships. Sea Communications: Seen from the Bridge.

June 2nd, Reg.—Covent Garden Opera "Tristan," Act III.

June 4th, Reg.—"The Rocking Horse Winner." Play from D. H. Lawrence.

June 5th, Nat.—*Covent Garden Opera, "Louise." Act II.

June 5th, Reg.—B.B.C. Orchestra (D), conductor: Adrian Boult. Arthur Catterall, violin. Lauri Kennedy, 'cello.

June 6th, Nat.—*Last performance for season (100th): In Town To-night.

June 7th, Nat.—Margate Municipal Orchestra.

June 7th, Reg.—B.B.C. Orchestra (B), conductor: Adolf Wiklund. English and Swedish programme.

June 8th, Nat.—Alistair Cooke: The Cinema.

June 8th, Reg.—Covent Garden Opera "Tales of Hoffman," Act I.

June 9th, Nat.—Down to the Sea in Ships. Sea Communications: The Question at Issue, by Sir Alan Anderson.

June 10th, Reg.—*Covent Garden Opera "Louise," Act I.

June 11th, Reg.—*"Compleat Angler," producer: D. G. Bridson.

June 14th, Reg.—B.B.C. Orchestra (B), conductor: Constant Lambert.

June 15th, Nat.—"The Thin Man," producer: L. Gilliam.

June 17th, Nat.—B.B.C. Orchestra (B), conductor: Sir Hamilton Harty.

June 18th, Reg.—*Glyndebourne: "Figaro," Act I.

VAL GIELGUD DEFENDS B.B.C. IN RADIO v. FILM DISPUTE

In recent numbers of the "Radio Times" a controversy has taken place between producers of actuality broadcasts and directors of documentary films, regarding methods of approach to material. In this special article Val Gielgud, Drama Director of the B.B.C., indicates the essential differences between radio and film treatment.

by Val Gielgud

A CONTROVERSY has lately appeared in the columns of the *Radio Times*, and elsewhere, with regard to the recent development in "actualities" or "documentaries" as handled respectively by cinema and by the B.B.C.

To my mind, this not altogether disagreeable discharge of blank cartridges, while no doubt it has given considerable amusement to the duellists, is rather beside the important point. In my view, it is beside the point because the two media are so completely different. The B.B.C. works, or in this field should work, journalistically. The film people are not simply providing a programme that is here to-night and gone to-morrow; they can, and do, spend far more time and money in producing a picture than can any B.B.C. department on producing a programme.

News Kills Art

I do not for one second imply that lack of either time or money should excuse shoddiness of handling or incompetence of approach to the problem, but it does imply working within certain limitations, and those limitations are not the same as those which bind the work of the documentary film. Nor, indeed, is the audience to which the resulting work is presented the same. But to enlarge further is unnecessary.

Mr. Grierson's principle that the microphone should be used creatively is, as a matter of fact, unarguable. Reproductive documentary, whether in vision or sound or in the two combined, cannot be art, and is seldom even interesting unless it is linked to "news" or "stunt." The reproduction by sound or vision of a horse winning the Derby is only interesting in so far as the Derby is news. And in broadcasting, as in the making of documentary films, the use of actuality only approaches the realm of art when it can adequately be woven into the other resources of the ordinary programme item.

No Need to Hurry

It is a comparatively recent development of broadcasting, owing to the establishment only at a fairly recent date of adequate recording facilities, that actuality material has begun to find its place in feature programme work. I would cheerfully admit that, as far as the use of that actuality material is concerned, we are still in the experimental stages, but that we are content to remain in those experimental stages is far from being the case.

The principal problem with which we are faced is that of relating actuality material, whether recorded or not, to produced studio material, welding the whole into a satisfactory shape—and anyone who has any experience of it knows how difficult it is to prevent actuality from hopelessly overweighting one side of the scales—and above all, lifting both on to precisely the same aural plane. This last may sound a high-falutin expression, but I know of no other to express the radio equivalent of really competent film-cutting.

Satisfactory solutions to these various problems, and real professional competence in the handling of the results, are only going to be achieved, as far as the B.B.C. is concerned, with the aid of experience and time.

No Refrigeration

Fortunately, or unfortunately, we are not in a position to put ourselves in cold storage or under laboratory conditions for several months, and therefore a certain number of programme items admittedly imperfect in this sphere are bound to be broadcast. In the meanwhile, for any practical help or hints the film people may care to give us we shall be profoundly grateful, but I would even go so far as to hint that they might perhaps discover in these experimental programmes of ours certain developments of sound sequence which might not be completely useless for comparative study with their own.

REAL PEOPLE MAKE RADIO, SAYS CREATOR OF HARRY HOPEFUL

In the last issue of "W.F.N." George Audit referred to the good work done in actuality programmes on the B.B.C. North Region.

D. G. Bridson, producer of "May-Day in England," broadcast on the National wave-length on May 1st, here gives his views on reality and the microphone.

I BELIEVE in the man-in-the-street and the man-in-the-field. I know that he is the star of everyday life, and I believe that he is the star of much good radio. For years I have heard him described as inarticulate. But it is all a question of *milieu*. Nobody is articulate outside his own particular setting. And the whole business of actuality radio, as I see it, is the broadcasting of actuality material in its right setting.

Rehearsals at Home

It was a belief in this theory which gave birth to Harry Hopeful. He can be described as a catalytic agent. His function is to meet folk on their own ground. And that is why he manages to get so much spontaneity, character and straight talking out of the countryside. Harry does not take the Dales, Cleveland, the Border or the Lakes to the studio: he brings the microphone to them.

When writing a Harry Hopeful show I bear that fact in mind. I write his scripts in the individual idioms of the people he meets on his walks. The mere-maker can say his own lines naturally, but he cannot say the clock-maker's; and vice versa. If he cannot say his own lines, the fault lies in my writing, and I re-write them forthwith.

D. G. Bridson

Before any character in a Harry Hopeful show rehearses in the studio he has rehearsed already with Harry and a portable microphone unit in his own back parlour. His wife has listened on head-'phones with me in the scullery. Between us we have got the dialogue into a shape that all of us understand. And the microphone, once seen on your own sideboard, is the sort of thing you never notice or bother about again.

Marching Orders

Actuality radio means to me the squaring of the microphone to actuality, rather than the squaring of actuality to the microphone. I have still to find a corner of everyday life to which it cannot adapt itself.

SCRAMBLED HISTORY MARS ST. GEORGE'S DAY BROADCAST

by George Audit

Dada used to produce poems by extracting words at random from a hat. This anarchism was raised to the level of a theory by the Surrealists, who claim that the element of chance in artistic creation is predetermined by psychic necessity in the author. Some such theory would seem to lie behind some of the B.B.C.'s actuality programmes.

My criticism of "An English Pageant," broadcast on St. George's Day, is based on the assumption, as old as Aristotle, that every work of art should have a beginning, a development, and an end. It should be an organism in the sense that the movement in it is determined by what has gone before. It must be a *whole*. "An English Pageant" mocks at these principles.

Gallipoli and Bede

It begins with the feudal ideal of a "puissant nation"; snippets of Shakespeare's *Henry V* and the like, more or less related in subject. Then, without a word of warning, we are pitchforked into the middle of the World War, into the Gallipoli venture of 1915. Masefield's poem, written in epic style, describes the sun setting over Lemnos, and the boats rowing from the ships, and the men wild with cheering, and the wonderful spirit of it all. Is that the English spirit, the tragedy of War?

Next comes a running commentary on the Zeebrugge raid. Very well done, but open to serious misinterpretation.

A few eulogistic scraps: "Thy swords have been turned into ploughshares," and that is 1936.

We next take a header back into the Middle Ages. The monks of the monastery at Jarrow are singing. It is the eighth century. The Venerable Bede has been travelling abroad. But what has that to do with the War or the English Pageant or St. George's Day? Jarrow is the cradle of English culture, says the producer. Very well; why not start with it?

Music well used

We are then jerked across eleven centuries into the industrial age. England's green and pleasant land changes overnight. William Cobbett is speaking, to the accompaniment of a galloping Sir Roger de Coverley. Why should anybody include Cobbett at this point? Obviously to add one of his penetrating sketches of the enclosure racket and the destruction of the English countryside. The producer merely makes him say that he finds a Midland village more pleasing to his eye than a Kent scene.

Now we are to be shown the struggle of the English people for liberty. So back we go to Magna Charta and the Areopagitica.

There is another five minutes to go, and this English monster develops a tail consisting of half-a-dozen disjointed after-thoughts. Scraps of poetry with music between; "in foreign lands there is a memorial to them," etc. And so, with a final wisp of music, an end is reached.

On the whole the producer knows how to use his music. He never blares it up between speech items, and is sometimes expert enough to run it as a continuous background. He uses it with effect in the Dardanelles scene, where a description of the soldiers' cheering is accompanied by a sad tune heralding their fate.

Constructive Approach

The raw material of this programme is excellent, but it is never fused into a consistent whole. A radio programme must *develop itself*. One item should lead inevitably into the next. Aural scene-shifting is bad enough (such as announcements that you are now to imagine yourself in such-and-such a place and time); but being tossed without warning from the Dardanelles to Bede and back into the nineteenth century is devastating.

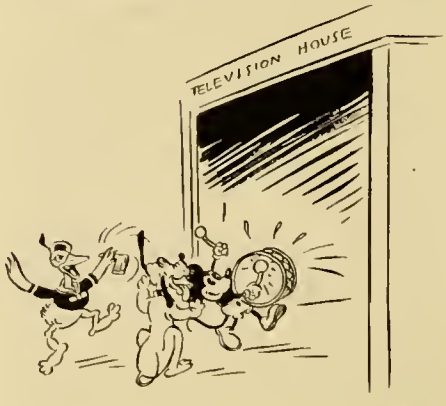
Early English chivalry, Industrialism, the World War and democratic liberty are not separate entities like oil and water. They grow out of common ground. They are dialectically related. A little re-reading of Sir Thomas Moore would prove that Utopias and societies are not so far apart. "An English Pageant" should have had one time sequence. It might have begun with the monastery of Jarrow and ended with the Jarrow of to-day—a slag-heap. It demanded a shape and life of its own. The word-from-the-hat method is not good enough.

MORNING GLORY

"If only the B.B.C. would allow a few asides and a little come-and-go in their speeches and announcements," moaned one of the women conference delegates after coming out of Broadcasting House recently. "Everything sounds as cut and dried as if it had been read from a paper."

They listened, she said, without blinking an eyelid, to the suggestion that 10.30 was a bit late for the morning talks to women, and anyway, what was the objection to 9 o'clock?

It seemed a sensible enough idea to her, but when she remembered that the B.B.C. doesn't begin broadcasting at all until after 10, she chuckled to herself. For there didn't seem much chance of getting them up earlier.



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TELEVISION

Hollywood Plays Ostrich But Disney Goes Ahead

Recent attempts by the American press to whip up public and professional enthusiasm for television have been countered with a complacent report by an expert commissioned by Hollywood interests to investigate the subject.

The visit to the States of Jeffrey Bernerd, distribution director of Gaumont-British, appears to have stirred up anxiety lest America should be a late entrant into the television field.

A New York paper, after emphasising that the London television station is to begin transmission this summer, quotes Mr. Bernerd as saying that his company has already signed contracts with the B.B.C. for the use of Gaumont-British newsreels; that before long those news-reels will be broadcast to every screen in the United Kingdom, and that eventually dramatic films will be shown in the same way.

Hollywood Hires Expert

But Hollywood refused to be frightened by these ominous descriptions of the British future. A group of film producers and financiers engaged Harry Chandlee, an expert on audience psychology, to investigate the position of the film in relation to television and to report his conclusions.

Chandlee's report has reassured Hollywood. Examining the psychological aspects of television as a competitor of the cinema, he claims that silent films were more popular than sound films, since they demanded an imaginative interpretation from the audience which the talkies have killed.

Craze will pass

In the same way, sound broadcasting is supplemented by the listener's visual imagination, which will be given no more play when television becomes general.

Interest in television will therefore die down once it has ceased to be a novelty. He further declares that the high cost of television sets will place them beyond the reach of the cinema public for some time to come.

Lone Progressive

But there are indications that television is already a serious consideration in at least one Hollywood quarter. Negotiations between Walt Disney Productions and R.K.O. Radio Pictures have resulted in R.K.O. obtaining a contract to distribute Disney's films for three years.

A statement by Disney, issued in Hollywood, runs: "In looking to the future, and that includes television, we believe our association with R.K.O. offers greater opportunities for the broader and more expansive fields of development."

Full Length Films

It is understood that the contract demands delivery of from eighteen to twenty-eight cartoons and one "animated feature" per year. The first animated feature will be *Snow White*, now entering production after a year of preparation. Merlin H. Aylesworth, chairman of R.K.O., has announced that it will be "a sensation and revolutionary as an art form."

ACADEMY MANAGER REJECTS COLOUR

MISS ELSIE COHEN, of the Academy Cinema, has probably seen more films than any other woman in the cinema, for her experience goes back twenty years. Miss Cohen says that at the present moment she is anti-colour-film, particularly when it is used naturalistically.

"First, I am against natural colour, because it tends to make the story film more and more like a stage play in photography. Though it does not seem to follow logical laws, I find that I am irritated by seeing a face in colour. For me, instead of lending greater depth to the face, it makes it appear empty. I have a feeling that I am watching a fantasy and not a drama of life.

"I feel that, at the present moment, the only suitable subject for colour is that of pure fantasy. I do not see any reason why occasionally certain sequences in an ordinary black-and-white film should not be made in colour; there are, of course, certain experiments, for instance, the two films, *The Colour Box* and *Kaleidoscope*, by Len Lye, which I could not conceive of being carried out in anything but colour.

"On the other hand I do not feel that any of the colour films of Fischinger are either as interesting or as expressive as those of his films which are in black-and-white.

"I feel that the camera is an unnatural method of reproducing nature, therefore, if colour is added, it makes an artifice within an artifice. For me, films of nature are the most lifeless of all coloured films. I cannot feel that the trees or grass or the houses have anything like the depth that can be obtained with first-class black-and-white camera work.

"Possibly this lifelessness is a fundamental difficulty with coloured films, because each individual sees a colour in a different way, and reacts differently. It therefore seems to me that however perfect the technical processes of coloured films become, it will be very difficult to systematise colour in such a way as to remove the feeling of fantasy."

"Colour Won't Stand Dignity"

says Humphrey Jennings

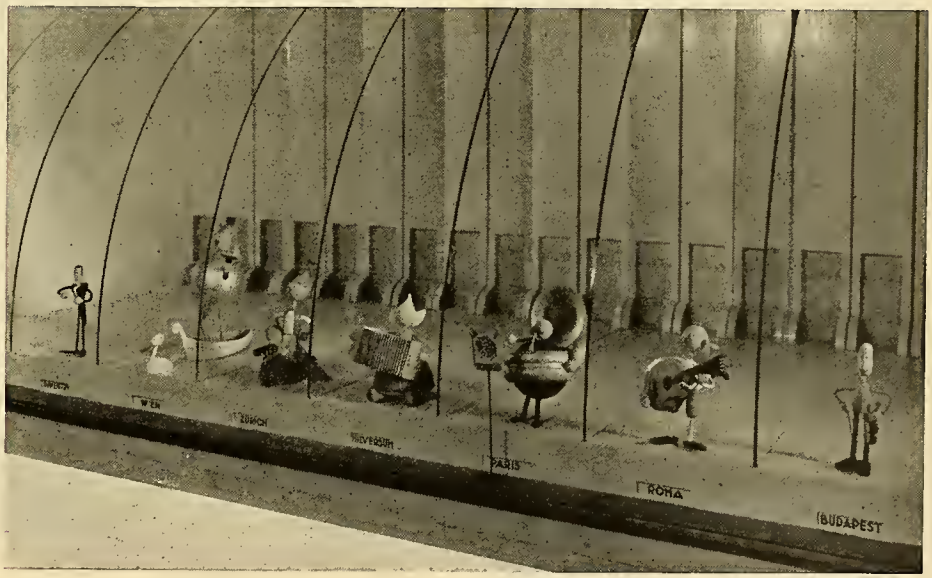
"The Trail of the Lonesome Pine" definitely establishes the following points, which are presented not as highbrow speculation, but as part of the urgent problem of how to use colour.

Colour is hopelessly revealing. It reveals not only new physical aspects and properties of objects, but becomes a devastatingly accurate index of the mentality of the film-maker, and of his approach to his material in the smallest details; and anything faked—faked sets or faked situations—shriek in colour where they could be got away with in black-and-white. This is because *Colour* and *Ideas* are fundamentally opposed; the black-and-white film has always lived on ideas; but colour depends upon *sensations*. It is an instinct for this that has sent people out of doors to make colour films. In *The Lonesome Pine* horses, rifles and trees look grand—the small-part players look pretty good—the "stars" look definitely not so hot.

Far greater care has been taken in shooting Sylvia Sidney and Macmurray than with the extras and log cabins. But that's just it; all that care shows—little touches of blue back-lighting and dabs of powder look terrible, because you can feel "the experts" putting them there. Again, on people the definition *seems* less good than on machines and dogs. It isn't. But one is satisfied with a sensation of dog; one is not so satisfied with a sensation in place of a *star;* and colour is a sensation. Hence by far the best parts of this film are scenes of a camp on fire, stampeding horses and rough-house scenes, where the action has got out of the Director's and Art Director's control. And unutterably awful are the smart hotel interiors with Sylvia Sidney telephoning in her négligée: they smell of arcs and plaster, simply because they are in colour and because the colour has been put there on purpose to look good. Of course, real interior locations should have been chosen.

There is one exception. When Sylvia Sidney has mud all over her face, and Macmurray has a swollen jaw, they look good. They have been knocked off their dignity and have become human beings. And this, in fact, is the secret of the business. Colour won't stand dignity. And the scenes of fire and rapid action do show what a whopping film will be made in Technicolor when everybody has come off the high horse. In the meantime, it should be said that the colour printing and Technicolor lab. work are as good as ever.

HUNGARIAN DIRECTOR CARICATURES CELEBRITIES IN COLOUR CARTOONS



From "Ether Ship"

Last year the Tatler showed a doll film, *Ether Ship*, made for the Dutch radio firm of Phillips. It was directed by a young Hungarian, George Pal, who, after making several films in Berlin during 1932, worked in Paris and Prague, and now divides his time between Eindhoven, the Detroit of Holland, and the Gasparcolour Studio here.

Pal works with drawn figures as well as dolls. His best cartoon is the coloured advertisement, *The Revolution of the* (*Phillips*) *Bulb*, but his most recent work is a series of doll films from the *Arabian Nights* with English dialogue.

In the first, *Ali Baba*, he depends upon composition and colour rather than movement, while he develops characters rather than using crowds.

The style is delicate and fantastic; occasionally, as in *Ether Ship*, the dolls are caricatures of celebrities like Tauber, Henry Hall and Strauss.

Pal is at present in London, making a picture for Gasparcolour, in which his chief material is glass.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS ★ THE PRINCIPAL ★ AND GENERAL

On this page we present an unbiassed service of outstanding reviews selected from the columns of the leading film critics. We cover West-end first-runs, general releases of important films and re-issues of old favourites.

Laurels for the best criticism of this month go to John Mosher for his review of "Ah Wilderness!" in the "New Yorker."

The "New Yorker" on "Ah Wilderness!"

What the young people of to-day may think of "Ah Wilderness!" is, of course, a mystery to this relic, but the mature will probably find considerable pleasure in it. The spirit of Eugene O'Neill's somewhat Tarkington-like play comes out nicely on the screen; especially, I feel, as regards the detail of background and costume and manner. The high-school dance and the graduation exercises and family suppers and the domestic gatherings around the evening lamp and the Fourth of July antics —all such things have been tended to with scholastic care. The costumes are superb, with big hair-ribbons on the girls and looming pompadours on the women, and choking starched collars on the boys. (Weren't they called Marley collars?). It's the era of "Glow-worm" and "Dearie" and the first White Steamers, and the golden age of picnics.

"Ah Wilderness!" reminds us again, in case we have forgotten the truism, that ordinary people and their lives are much more exciting than the extraordinary and their performances.

John Mosher, *New Yorker*.

Clarence Brown

Clarence Brown, Greta Garbo's favourite director, and M.G.M.'s leading studio megaphonist, returned to his small-town birthplace, Clapham, Mass., for background material used in making Eugene O'Neill's "Ah Wilderness!" His experiences out of doors have converted him to a new enthusiasm for "real" film settings.

SYLVIA SCARLETT (George Cukor—Radio).

There was a time, not so long ago, when Katherine Hepburn announced with much fervour that she wasn't going to be a morning glory. I am afraid that she will have to do something about that pretty soon.

C. A. Lejeune, *Sunday Observer*.

KLONDYKE ANNIE (Raoul Walsh—Paramount).

It is a horrible picture, . . . a disgrace . . . to the entire film industry.

Hollywood Spectator.

It is doubtful if a more nauseating, ill-conceived piece of work has ever been put on the screen.

Film Pictorial.

The Decency people baffle me when they begin to fret over Miss Mae. I can never understand those worthies who look upon her as a menace to youth and the proprieties.

John Mosher, *New Yorker*.

THE COUNTRY DOCTOR (Henry King—Fox).

I try to think of Miss West, and the little faces and antics and trickeries of the Canadian children persist in intervening.

John Mosher, *New Yorker*.

It is a motion picture with drama in the tale it has to tell, and it is as logical and as real as life itself.

The Washington Evening Star.

KING OF BURLESQUE (Sidney Lansfield—Fox).

Now that I come to write of this picture I cannot for the life of me remember what it was all about. Through a glass darkly, I recall a certain amount of "lavish spectacle"—a galaxy of Broadway lovelies swinging on trapezes hung from the ceiling of a theatre-cum-restaurant. Below sat the élite of New York, eating roast chicken and craning their necks—an indigestible and faintly sickening combination.

The Referee.

IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT. Re-issue. (Frank Capra—Columbia).

Too often the camera is used to give a crude and artificial glamour to unpleasant people; here it is used to show how much good nature, humour and decency the world still contains. Peter and Ellie are, indeed, so pleasant and human that one feels a positive regret that it is impossible to shake hands with celluloid figures.

The Times.

IN OLD KENTUCKY (George Marshall—Fox).

The personality of the late Will Rogers pervades the film *In Old Kentucky*. It is difficult, when seeing him so real and vital on the screen, to realise that he can never make another film. This is one of those racehorse films which Hollywood makes so well and keeps on making.

Continental Daily Mail.

ANYTHING GOES (Lewis Milestone—Paramount).

The film version of *Anything Goes* is one of the most delightful musical comedies ever produced.

Sunday Pictorial.

Sentimental Survey of the American Scene

The story is nonsense; the dialogue is alive with smart humour. Bing Crosby is no better and no worse than usual. Ethel Merman works a number or two. I wish she wouldn't.

Sydney Carroll, *Sunday Times*.

IF YOU COULD ONLY COOK (William Seiter—Columbia).

The comedy flows along without the slightest ripple of wit or surprise on its technically smooth surface.

The Times.

PREMIÈRES RELEASES

Fantasy droops before Mr. Marshall, so intractably British in the American scene. He does, I suppose, represent some genuine national characteristics, if not those one wishes to see exported: characteristics which it is necessary to describe in terms of inanimate objects: a kind of tobacco, a kind of tweed, a kind of pipe: or in terms of dog, something large, sentimental and moulting, something which confirms one's preference for cats. Graham Greene, *The Spectator.*

Like those earlier Columbia hits, *It Happened One Night, Broadway Bill, Love Me Forever, If You Could Only Cook* has a quality most easily assessed as charm, which definitely compensates for such minor shortcomings as its title, borrowed from an antique improper story and explainable only as one more evidence of the pitiful innocence of the Hays organisation. *Time.*

SOAK THE RICH (Hecht—MacArthur).

Soak the Rich works out, however it may have happened, as a rather cruel guying of young college radicals, and a defence of the warm heart of capitalism on which the film industry thrives. C. A. Lejeune, *Sunday Observer.*

The Cowboy Philosopher who was America's Homespun Humourist

It is a design in which character is often hidden beneath sophisticated phrases; ideals passionately mouthed by college boys and fanatically accepted by lunatics; sentiment avuncularly warmed; wealth benevolently distributed; detectives hard but incapable; and marriage a game to be played. *The Times.*

MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN (Frank Capra—Columbia).

Columbia's star team of Writer Robert Riskin and Director Frank Capra are co-masters of a unique kind of U.S. comedy, part farce, part fantasy and part pure hokum, which has been often imitated but never successfully copied since they brought to the screen *It Happened One Night.* It is the essence of Riskin-Capra magic to defy analysis on paper because it fits so perfectly its proper medium, the screen. *Time.*

Hollywood's Elizabethan Tough Boy

THE PRISONER OF SHARK ISLAND (John Ford—Fox).

Beginning with high promise, the film fades off. I am afraid Warner Baxter, known chiefly as an "engaging" actor, fails to give his difficult role the force it needs. Students of American history may well reflect, however, on the earlier episodes.

John Mosher, *New Yorker.*

ROBIN HOOD OF ELDORADO (William Wellman—M.G.M.)

Mr. Warner Baxter continues his one-man campaign against the injustices of American history. Just a few weeks ago Mr. Baxter was telling us, in *Shark Island,* of the cruel persecution of Dr. Mudd, the innocent physician who treated the assassin of Abraham Lincoln. Now he is equally indignant about the wrongs inflicted on the Mexican inhabitants of California by the invading Americans during the days of the gold rush. Between Mr. Baxter and the cinema, the film-going citizens of the United States are not to be allowed to grow smug about the national past.

Richard Watts Jr., *Herald-Tribune.*

THE IMPROPER DUCHESS (Harry Hughes—C.F.D.)

Five years ago, or thereabouts, this bedroom farce of American official graft and sycophancy was a mildly witty, slightly daring stage-piece, characteristic of its time. It is still characteristic of that time, but it no longer seems either faintly witty or tolerably daring. I am afraid that Miss Yvonne Arnaud, whom the talkies have never treated yet according to her merits, is merely being associated again with another misfit film.

C. A. Lejeune, *Sunday Observer.*

What Price Morning Glory!

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (Max Reinhardt—Warner Bros.)

It has all the faults that grandiose stage productions of Shakespeare once committed but have now happily outgrown. The fairies are deplorable, the whole setting an animated Noel Paton, with hints of later illustrations to children's books. Puck, alas, is an "enfant terrible" from the American comic film. *The Times.*

As I see it, Reinhardt falls between two stools. He leaves most of the speeches unimpaired; and the effect of them on the screen is simply to make one feel they are out of place. All the brilliant mechanical resources of the cinema are mobilised on these occasions while the screen is copying out, as you may say, the words of Shakespeare. Reinhardt compromises; for, besides this ineffective transcription of the language, he occasionally decides to call up his purely cinematic reserves. His camera reduces to terms of realism that element which, in Shakespeare's play, is left to the imagination, or rather is *fed* to the imagination by Shakespeare's wizardry of language. It is this very compromise, this timid effort to get the best of two incompatible worlds which (for me) makes Reinhardt's experiment a failure. W. E. Williams, *Sight and Sound.*

FOLLOW THE FLEET (Mark Sandrich—Radio).

Mr. Astaire, along with Chaplin and Disney, is one of the really significant trio that the cinema has yet evolved. He has a funny voice, that makes you nervous on its high notes, a funny face, that no one could call handsome; he cannot, so far as I know, act, and he never appeared yet in a film that merited a moment's serious attention. If Fred Astaire were the cleverest dancer in all Christendom he wouldn't be where he is to-day if the world didn't love him. More than Chaplin, more than Disney, he has caught the affectionate imagination of the people. I have met lots of people who do not like Chaplin. I have heard of a number of people who are bored by Disney. But I have never known anyone who did not like Fred Astaire. Somewhere in his odd monkey-sad face, his loose legs, his shy grin, or perhaps the anxious diffidence of his manner, he has found the secret of persuading the world.

C. A. Lejeune, *Sunday Observer.*

PUBLIC NUISANCE No. 1 (Marcel Varnel—C.F.D.).

"Me and my dog," sings Miss Frances Day, "are lost in the fog." There are others in this production, we may suspect, who are finding themselves in the same predicament as Miss Day and her dog. *The Times.*

EDITORIAL

THE FILM PEOPLE must sooner or later define their attitude towards the propaganda films which are pressing increasingly for space in the country's theatres. A large amount of propaganda is purely commercial, but a proportion is directed to the service of the state and the citizen. The film people have been muddle-headed and have not drawn a distinction between commercial advertising and the public welfare. Exhibitors at the local meetings of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association say loudly that it is all advertisement and must be paid for. But is it? Have public messages regarding health and housing and road safety to be classed with messages which urge the sale of proprietary articles? Exhibitors must discover the difference.

In no other major film-producing country is the film industry permitted to avoid its national duty. The influence of the N.R.A. on Hollywood films has been considerable, and Mr. Hays is proud to announce that the producers have helped in the creation of national opinion. The British industry has demonstrated no such sense of joining voluntarily in public schemes of social betterment. Occasionally a hospital film or a slum film is contributed by Pathé or Gaumont, but these are exceptions.

Our film people are notoriously generous in their private affairs, and we believe it is only a lack of organisation which prevents their making a reasonable contribution to the many social services which now seek public understanding and support.

Organisation would be easy. There are thousands of causes shouting for attention, and so many that, if they had their way, they would occupy all the screen time in the Kingdom. But let there be a committee—a trade committee—to pick and choose. Let the committee have representation from all political parties. Let the committee decide the limits of screen time available: three minutes or five minutes as the case may be.

This is a practical suggestion and we join gladly with our elder and contemporary, *The Kinematograph Weekly*, in putting it forward. There are national messages which the public should hear. The film trade has the ear of the public and is permitted by the state to exercise its calling and freedom. But there are no rights without responsibilities.

WANTED—MORE GUSTO

TURN OF THE TIDE, the film which describes the life of a Yorkshire fishing village, has not booked so well as its sponsors expected. It is an unusual film and deserved greater success. Its departure from the ordinary is that it makes a brave effort to deal realistically with the life of simple people. Though actors play the fishermen roles, the setting is real, and background of boats and the sea is woven dramatically into the story.

Turn of the Tide is not a great film, but it is well worth promoting to editorial notice, for we have too little realism in our film stories. We have not nearly so much as we had in silent days. One of the tragedies of sound was that it brought the film more than ever indoors, nearer to the theatre, further from those epics of outdoor life where—because of silence—physical gusto was the first necessity of good movie.

It was natural enough that, with the novelty of sound, cinema should fall into the temptation of dialogue and make its drama more or less exclusively from the clash of voices. But physical gusto would still seem to lie near the heart of the matter. The weakness of *Rhodes* is its dreary long-distant and completely unphysical observation of pioneering scenes. On the other hand the wonder of Fred Astaire is in his unmitigated hoofing. The strength of *Mutiny on the Bounty* is the physical command demonstrated equally by Laughton and the ship.

Let the producers seek the gusto more often. One way of finding it is in greater realism: pursuing the method of *Turn of the Tide* and joining the realist virtues of documentary with the virtues of story. *Turn of the Tide* did not allow the sea to add its full powers of storm and stress to the drama in hand. But any producer worth his salt should know how to better its example.

B.B.C. PATRON OF THE ARTS

SCRUTATOR in the *Sunday Times* makes a valuable contribution to the discussion of B.B.C. policy.

"Perhaps we have exaggerated the cultural significance of broadcasting, as a former generation did that of university extension lectures. It may be true that, if both are given the same chance, the higher forms of entertainment will prevail in the long run over the inferior, but it is also true that there is no real culture except through personal effort and internal conflict within a man, which is learning.

"It was a grossly excessive claim for broadcasting made by one Member of Parliament that it is the greatest instrument for culture and education ever devised. What is spoken over the air is scattered to the winds; at best, it can only set a vague fashion of thought. But the written or the printed word remains as a continuous counsellor and solace.

"If this be so, we must not pitch our cultural hopes of broadcasting too high; we must be content with it as an agent of publicity, a lecture and news agency, and a sort of ground bass to the activities of life, and not as an instrument of the higher civilisation of the mind. And a corollary of that estimate would be that we might have to define the boundaries of its activities more strictly than hitherto, and even divert some of the profits of its vast monopoly of the air to foster the civilisation that depends on the associations of men and women in smaller groups and localities for the service of the arts."

It is an attractive proposal that some B.B.C. profits should be devoted to the support of poets and the maintenance of artists. We agree a thousand times. But why should the poets and the artists not be *inside* the B.B.C.? The smaller groups—might they not come together in the name of intelligent broadcasting by these self-same poets and artists? The shape and substance—and the permanence—of an art well made are not beyond the powers of radio.

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FILM INSTITUTE MUST MAKE A FRESH START

The British Film Institute, the organisation which, under a grant of £7,000 per annum from the Privy Council, operates for the promotion of educational and cultural films, is re-organising its staff and policy. Behind this fact lies one of the more hectic stories of recent development in the film world. In its short three-year career the Institute has not been altogether a happy ship.

The Institute has promised too much and done too little. It has, like the pelican, swallowed, or tried to swallow, more than it could reasonably digest. It has tried to corner every infant growth in the film world which was running around without a guardian, and it has even been accused of an ambition to repeat the monopolist success of the Broadcasting Company. It has attempted the impossible task of combining educational interests with the interests of Wardour Street. It has had the difficulty of finding a single policy from a Board of Governors, some of whose interests are not identifiably either educational or cultural.

The result has been to make enemies in a dozen quarters. The most ribald of them, Mr. Fredman, the editor of the *Film Daily*, has kept Wardour Street laughing with his tales of foreign adventures and Stresa sunshine.

Negative criticism is not, however, the best service at this stage of the Institute's development. The Institute is accepted in principle by all sensible operators in the educational and cultural field. It already performs the necessary functions of providing information to schools on film and projection, and of encouraging the growth of film societies.

Not all its committees have been sterile. Those interested in the different aspects of education by film (history, geography, surgery, etc.) have been given an opportunity of mustering results and discussing possibilities. The quarterly issue of *Sight and Sound* represents a vital service to education.

In view, however, of present difficulties and misunderstandings the following constructive suggestions might be useful to the Institute in the second period of its growth.

No Commitments

Let there be no entangling alliances with foreign organisations. Past association with the International Institute at Rome, and German expeditions on the invitation of Hitler, have been compromising. The International Institute is not as international as it sounds, and is too closely associated with Mussolini and Fascism. Shaking hands with Hitler is not the most lucid of cultural gestures. Beware, too, in this connection, of foreign exhibitions. In common belief they are a hot-bed of log-rolling and ballyhoo. An educational and cultural organisation must cultivate detachment in such matters.

Let the understanding with Wardour Street and the Trade be the sensible one of realising that majority entertainment interests are in a different category from cultural interests. Construct a cultural cinema where it is practically possible: in film societies, specialised theatres and in the non-theatrical fields of the discussion clubs. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" is a more sensible policy than busy-bodying with the high and also delicate finance of the movies.

Drop the pelican policy for ever. Cinema represents a wide field of interests and many growing points. Each one has its own character, its own purposes, its own ambitions. Vitality is not to be served by trying to bring all under a single umbrella.

Co-operate with outside educational libraries. Co-operate with the propagandist film units outside. Co-operate with the film societies, even the progressive ones. Accept the necessity for entertainment, and do not sniff at vulgar entertainment. Do not sabotage these independent activities because they follow their own courses. It takes many courses to make the vital world of cinema.

No Favourites

Beware, above all, of alliance with any particular production, distribution, or equipment company. When a particularly vigorous company comes along there is a natural temptation to say "This means the future of educational films: let us concentrate on helping it." Good. But the gesture of exclusive help means harm to others.

In using government money there is a special responsibility, and the personnel of the Institute must demonstrate the same detachment from particular interests as the Civil Service. The film world is run on hospitality, flattery and ballyhoo, the more reason for detachment.

The field is wide, and there are many people cultivating separate corners. Concentrate on organising them and see that they do not overlap unnecessarily. Concentrate on building a really fine information service, rather than an entering into competition with interests which are already doing effective work.

There is, for example, danger in a library service unless it is doing something which others are failing to do.

Concentrate particularly on services which are not now being done. The educational field represents the Institute's strongest suit, and particularly the classroom aspect of educational film work. The theories governing it should be worked out, and agreed, with teachers all over the country.

The strength of the Institute is not in *claiming* authority, but in *creating* it. In the first period there have been too many claims, too many names, and too much seeking of influence by manœuvre. The pioneer days are past; let there now be a simple day-to-day service of the many communities in education and culture, in production and distribution, which require the Institute's help.

Here, in any case, is good luck to the Institute, and the assurance of every aid *W.F.N.* can give it.

Methodist Miller's Money Buys Hollywood Company for Britain

NEWS of the Universal deal, whereby British interests have secured control of a major Hollywood company, discloses the fact that J. Arthur Rank, millionaire flour-maker, staunch Methodist, and owner of the "Methodist Times," is extending his interests in the British film industry.

Director of the powerful Western Electric Company, this forty-year-old money baron is gradually becoming a major power behind the scenes in the British film industry.

The money comes from Ranks, the biggest flour millers in Great Britain, with mills at Southampton and elsewhere.

Interested, too, in the educational film field, he is the financier behind British Educational and General Services, a £20,000 company designed to co-ordinate the work of distributing films and apparatus to educational institutions.

The flour money has also brought into being the Religious Film Society, an organisation which will promote the production and distribution of films in the evangelical interest.

National Films is yet another of the miller's playgrounds. With Lady Yule he backed the production of *Turn of the Tide*, the film of Yorkshire fishing life which, despite excellent notices from the critics and many compliments on its adventurous use of real-life material, is not believed to be commanding wide public support.

When C. M. Woolf resigned from Gaumont-British, Mr. J. Arthur Rank was one of the leading sponsors of his new company, General Film Distributors, a company conceived on the scale of a major renting concern. When General Film Distributors were one of the parties in the deal with Universal, J. Arthur Rank was again on the list of directors.

Into London Films went more flour money.

An amusing factor in the situation is that the Methodist Church, with which Rank is more religiously associated, recently published a book called *The Devil's Camera*, one of the most vicious attacks on the film industry ever written. His own editor, R. G. Burnett, was part author.

The great Methodist has now, if he wishes, sufficient financial influence to give effect to the book's ethical and uplifting sentiments. But will he?

I COVER THE WARDOUR FRONT

By Andrew Buchanan

The Art of Film Production (Pitman, 5s. to you) is intended for both professionals and amateurs, as the division between the two camps is of little real importance. If professionals had the freedom of amateurs, and amateurs had the money of the professionals (without their synthetic traditions) film-making might still escape becoming a habit. However, my other book, *The Way of the Cinema* (5s. to you) was described as the "first book on films for the man-in-the-street," and so I hope this one may prove interesting to the man-in-the-studio.

Firstly, I have endeavoured to paint a picture of Filmdom as it is to-day, with its glittering "First Nights," at which the audiences are frequently more interesting than the pictures. Then I seek to find out why films are as necessary as daily newspapers, and cigarettes, and why twenty million people visit British cinemas every week. I suggest that the cinema habit is practised almost unconsciously, and that the colossal system for providing endless entertainment is undermining itself. I lament the fact that there is no time "to stand and stare," for there are far too many films, too many cinemas, too many audiences, and too much of everything, to create a feeling of solidity.

The temperature of the film industry is too high, and it cannot remain feverish indefinitely. I may be wrong about all this, but I certainly feel that a few notices stuck around Wardour Street, stating "You Have Been Warned," might compel the industry to quieten down a little, and think things over.

I deal with television, and hope that the films it introduces will do justice to the new medium, by refusing to imitate the cinema screen. I refer to the vogue for Shakespeare, and hope his name may be billed almost as large as the stars featuring in his works. I praise the *Broadway Melodies* of the screen for their marvellous synthetic unreality, and the almost inhuman efficiency with which they are made. I praise Chaplin for sitting on the hill-top, and watching all the other stars burn themselves out.

Warning to Hitchcock.

I congratulate Laughton for being a genius, and admire Korda for introducing a dignity into filmdom hitherto unknown. I venture to warn Hitchcock to be a little less "*unusual*" in future films, as I feel he is inclined to muddle people with the terrific twists he gives to his plots. I criticise *Man of Aran*, and wish Flaherty had shot less, and cut it himself—for it begins at the end, and ends in the middle, and, anyway, it's all about nothing very important.

I express admiration for Elsie Cohen, and also for the man who designed the Curzon. I explain as lucidly as I can what a documentary film is, and why it is becomingly increasingly important. I liken the short realist film's appearance, between two endless features, to the opening of a window and the flooding of the auditorium with fresh air, and I look forward to a merging of the fictional and documentary worlds.

I denounce nationalism and jingoism in newsreels, and prophesy the time when they will become mere stop-press columns on the end of carefully-produced news films based on the *March of Time* idea. I make a distinction between dialogue and sound films, and also between the manufacturer and the creator of pictures. After all that, I give instructions (on film production), primarily, but not solely, for amateurs, and include a few recipes for producing magazines which, I suggest, provide a maximum of experience for those wishing to become directors. I say a lot of other things, some which will please, and others which will offend, but I can't help that, because the answer is in the negative as usual.

Andrew Buchanan

RADIO by Rudolf Arnheim (Faber and Faber, 12s. 6d.).

In this successor to his book *Film*, Dr. Arnheim subjects the aesthetic capabilities of the microphone to a minute analysis, with special reference to broadcast drama.

Dr. Arnheim is well aware of the creative power of the microphone, but his insistent emphasis on the aesthetics of radio is misplaced. The technical-aesthetic difficulties are now, at least partially, solved, and the great problem at present facing radio is the adequate application of rapidly-advancing microphone technique to the social and educational demands of our time. Here, indeed, is a field for the interpretative analyst equipped with social, economic and aesthetic knowledge. But Dr. Arnheim covers no new ground and opens no new perspectives of theory, because he fails to relate his analysis to the wider issues.

NOVELIST SATIRISES BRITISH PRODUCTION

Eric Siepmann, brother of Charles Siepmann, B.B.C. Director of Talks, is at present in Spain engaged on a second novel. He is 33.

After leaving Oxford he spent a short time on the stage, and then took up journalism, working for the "Manchester Guardian," and for "The Times" as New York correspondent.

He worked for some time on productions for London Films, and did dialogue and script work for "Moscow Nights."

In the future he intends to devote himself entirely to writing.

WATERLOO IN WARDOUR STREET by Eric Siepmann (Chatto and Windus, 7s. 6d.).

This is a gorgeous book. Unlike Paul Morand, whose *France la Doulce* restricted its satire almost entirely to a witty presentation of known facts, Mr. Siepmann tempers his highly malicious reportage with flights into regions of fantasy beyond the reach of even the most extravagant movie-czar.

His story is about B.H.F. Ltd., originally Boni, Houndsditch and Fünckel, but now, in the boom period of rearmament, British Historical Films. A mammoth picture: *The History of England* is planned, money is poured out like water, every notability is put under contract, the producer suffers from an hallucination that he is Napoleon, and finally, the film, without a foot being shot, makes an enormous profit out of sheer ballyhoo.

Many people will quite rightly avoid recognising themselves in Mr. Siepmann's gallery of cleverly drawn characters. He never commits himself, but nevertheless there is not a single studio type missing.

It is a really funny book—even for the layman (who will think it more improbable than it really is).

FILM PRODUCTION by Adrian Brunel (Geo. Newnes Ltd., 7s. 6d.).

Mr. Brunel has written yet another book on film. This time he takes the whole sphere of film production as his field. He writes racily and amusingly on all stages of preparation, photography and direction. If the book has a fault, it is that in 200 pages there must necessarily be some superficiality. Mr. Brunel has been conscious of this and a series of appendices written by experts supply some detail on the functions of studio personnel.

BLIGH ON THE BOUNTY (Dent, 1s. 6d.).

In response to the demand for authentic information on the now famous mutiny comes this fascinating little book. It is Bligh's own record of the expedition. Hollywood's mutiny through the eyes of the principal character is scarcely less romantic than the film.

TRAGEDY IS BOX OFFICE IN JAPAN'S HOLLYWOOD

By Winifred Holmes

Japan is second only to Hollywood in film production.

American films received their worst blow when sound came in, and the language problem presented itself. On top of that there had developed in Japan a strong feeling against Western films. They saw a grave moral danger in them, and saw, too, the money that could be made out of the industry.

In 1934 the Manchurian issue caused an outbreak of patriotism which was christened the "Nippon Spirit." Everything Japanese had to be cultivated, foreign ideas were tolerated only if useful. High tariffs were set up. Exchange rates for films were disadvantageous for importers. The Japanese industry thrived.

Studios were built in Tokyo and Kyoto, Western technicians engaged, historical plays photographed and enjoyed by the people as something indigenous to them, and in the age-old tradition of *Kabuki* and *Noh* drama.

These *Jidai geki* or *Keng eki*, classical mediaeval plays based on the adventures of *samurai*, clan feuds, and wandering knight-errants, or *ronin*, have little sex interest in them, but plenty of sword fighting. *Kendo*, the art of handling a sword, corresponds to European fencing, and is as old as Japanese history.

In the silent days American films began to lose ground when stories of contemporary Japanese life, closely imitating the American methods, were made in studios at Shochiku and Nikkatsu. With them a group of screen actors and actresses came into being. Previous to that, stage actors had been used.

Endless Sword Fighting

In the early beginnings of the Japanese film the stories were historical.

To a Westerner the sword fighting is endless. The hero invariably has to tackle twelve men at once, as in the old Fairbanks films, but the audience is not waiting to see him do the lot down. It watches each move and thrust æsthetically as if at a ballet or bull-fight. The movements are stylised to a musical accompaniment, and the whole thing is semi-lyrical in quality, the hero dying to an exquisite dirge on the samisen. *The Defence of Honour* and *The Tale of the Forty-seven Ronin* are two of these films.

But American films changed things. After young Japanese had seen some American films, there were only the old folk and the peasants who really liked the *jidai geki*. The young people demanded modern subjects or Western films.

So *Shimpa geki*, stories of contemporary Japanese life, were made. Film stars came into prominence. But even now they are rated lower than hereditary Kabuki actors, getting at the most £1,000 a year, instead of the £10,000 which the actor gets.

Shimpa geki were popular at once, and Western films began to lose their grip, dropping from 80 per cent to 50 per cent of the year's distribution.

When talkies came in, the percentage of Western films dropped to 20. Few Japanese speak English, so Western talkies are now almost entirely shown in the shop-window theatres of Tokyo, Asoko, Kobi and Kyoto.

The government censor, while still being extremely strict with native films, occasionally leaves kisses in foreign films to-day, or makes an ironic comment which turns subversiveness into a laughing-stock.

Shimpa geki chiefly deal with gangster or student life, and present people quarrelling, working hard, or falling in love without the consent of parents. This means a death pact on the part of the lovers, a daily feature of contemporary Japanese life.

A recent very popular film, *Eternal Love*, tells of a girl who gives up her lover to marry her father's choice, an elderly rich man who will save the family from ruin. The bridegroom, hearing of the shaky state of the family's finances, backs out, and the girl goes into business herself, to save the situation. With the help of yet another man, whom she eventually marries, she prevents the printing concern from going bankrupt and is able to retire into private domestic life. The clever husband henceforth carries everything on his own shoulders, and the girl is much admired by her audience.

Japanese Love to Cry

Audiences love tragedy, feeling that they have not had their money's worth unless they have cried heartily. They like comedy, Chaplin and Mickey Mouse preferred. They make comedies of their own on such themes as the two married couples; the old-fashioned husband with a Westernised wife who refuses to kow-tow to him, or the Europeanised husband with a wife of the old school.

Steps have been taken to interest the foreign market in Japanese films, but with little success so far.

Russia enjoyed the historical *jidai geki* as early as 1928. In 1930, young movie critic, Ippei Fukuro, took to Moscow a film of contemporary Japan, *What Made Her Do So?* The *Osaka Mainichi* comments: "the thought of promoting a Japanese Proletarian picture in Soviet Russia—of all the countries in the world!—makes one flush somewhat, but the Japanese cinéists hope that it might help to bring about a chance of selling more Japanese pictures to that country."

Above: Japanese lovers à la American
Left: Comic Bairnsfather characters
Below: From a recent patriotic film

Japan has long realised the value of films for education and propaganda. News-reels are made under the auspices of the *Osaka Mainichi* newspaper, and the material made up into films for use in schools and colleges. In May, 1928, Children's Movie Day was instituted in Tokyo under the co-operation of the Education and Home Departments and the five larger cinema companies, and films suitable for juvenile audiences were shown on Sunday mornings "with satisfactory results" (*Japan Year Book*, 1930).

Large Film Planned

In 1925 the Minister of State for Education, in the 52nd Report, under the heading of "Improvement of Popular Education," states:—"In order to make known to the people in general the movements of the members of the Imperial Family, the Department was authorised to make use of the cinema films about the Court, and had them exhibited to the public. Besides, the Department selected, as a means of education and for scientific reference, some appropriate materials, and had them filmed for the common benefit and enlightenment."

In 1932 the Department itself made nine films and distributed thirty-nine under its auspices.

The latest project is a ten-reel propaganda film of present-day Japan, now in production and scheduled to be shown at the end of 1936. Famous painter Fujita has chosen the child actor for it, and is advising on scenes, etc. Franco-Gaumont Co., Paris, are its European distributors.

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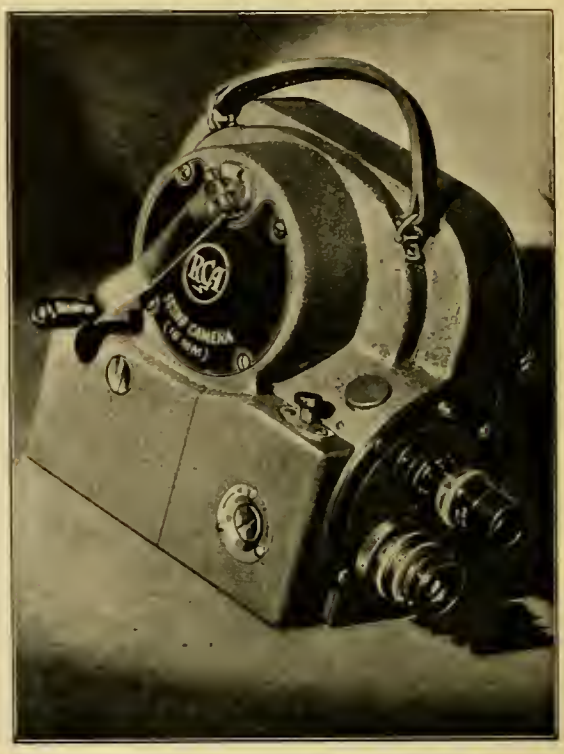

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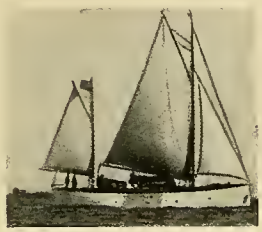
Two Expeditions Planning Voyages to Film the World

THREE KETCHES TO COVER FIVE OCEANS

In a few weeks three 16-mm. camera and sound units are to be sent to different parts of the world to make educational films. Three 60-feet auxiliary sailing ketches are being fitted out for the crew of seven who will man each boat. One unit will cover Europe and the south coast of Asia, another all Africa, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, and the other North, Central, and South America.

NO MEAN PROGRAMME

Sponsored by the School Films Company, headed by Captain C. Rudstow-Brown, a retired military man, films will be made of raw products, manufactures and industries, architecture, agriculture, horticulture, botany, anthropology, zoology, commerce, transportation, irrigation, fisheries, rivers and ports.



Each boat will carry a pair of 33-h.p. Bergius Diesel engines, although it is hoped to cover most distances under sail, and the navigation will be under the control of an expert picked by the Admiralty. For the sake of economy, no paid crew will be carried, and the work of the boat will be shared by every man aboard.

PERSONNEL

The crew of the first boat will consist of Captain Rudstow-Brown, Captain R. W. M. Lloyd, retired R.N. (navigating officer), George Rutherford, one-time senior cameraman for the Provincial Motion Picture Bureau of Ontario, Canada (cameraman), R. J. Carruthers (commentator), G. E. Rude (educational writer), H. F. Alton (wireless operator and electrician), and a sound operator and engineer yet to be selected. R.C.A. equipment will be used.

FIVE YEAR PLAN

Each trip will last about eight months, and journeys as far as three hundred miles inland may have to be undertaken. Over a period of five and a half years they intend to produce 3,500 reels of film.

Two Scotsmen, J. C. Elder of Glasgow, and J. B. Dalrymple of Ayr, are to start shortly on a three-years' world tour on a sailing ship. They plan to bring back, on film, a record of the world and its people to be used for a "Truth in Education" campaign.

Left: Mr. Dalrymple. Right: Mr. Elder

Some travel shorts will be made, and arrangements have been effected for world-wide distribution of the educational films.

Lord Rothermere, a recent champion of the Scottish Nationalists' cause, has through his paper, the *Daily Record*, backed the adventure. Offers of assistance, in the way of equipment for the ship, blankets, etc., have been received from firms interested in putting Scotland on the map.

The *Daily Record* is sending a reporter along, and radio transmission will be installed.

Dutchmen Film Holiday Campers

Two young Dutchmen, Josephson and Van der Linden, have made a film on Texel, one of the most beautiful islands of the North Sea.

Working under limited financial conditions, they have told a simple and rather commonplace story about a group of holiday campers. The atmosphere of the sea and the sand-dunes is well registered, and dialogue reduced to a minimum.

The resulting necessity of concentrating on local atmosphere and direct action, already established by Siodmak in *Menschen am Sonntag*, and by Machaty in *Extase*, is another pointer to the possibility of making inexpensive location pictures.

Workers Reveal Secrets of Building Conditions with Concealed Camera

A notable amateur 16 mm. film has recently been made and financed under strange circumstances. A group of building trade workers, engaged on a big construction job, decided to make a film of their own conditions. Money was raised by the workers themselves in several ways. They raffled a pound note. One of them took snapshots of the job and sold prints at twopence apiece, and several pounds were collected in this way.

Kino loaned apparatus, but production was executed entirely by the workers themselves. The shooting was done under difficulties since no official permission was obtained. The camera was concealed for every shot.

The film contains a vivid sequence of workers meeting to discuss and carry out a strike. These scenes were staged and are lively and exciting. The whole film, technically crude, is full of a vitality and an authentic observation rare in amateur films.

The material was edited by Kino and is being released by them. The film runs for about ten minutes and is called *Construction*. It is a remarkable job of pioneer work, and has already been shown in some thirty building trade union branches. Encouraged by the film's success, these branches have held a conference and decided to produce a further film based on the trade union attitude to housing.

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AEROPLANES AND TAPE MACHINES COVER THE WORLD FOR NEWS-REEL

THE organisation of a modern news-reel has to be as quick and efficient as Fleet Street journalism. The public is no longer content with a news-reel that confines itself to Lady Blah-Blah launching a ship, Lord Ho-Hum inspecting Boy Scouts, and an interview with the oldest inhabitant of Waggling-Parva on the short-skirt situation. Audiences want news, and they want it hot.

Mr. Castleton-Knight, of Gaumont-British, in an exclusive *W.F.N.* interview, explained a few of the reasons for the success of the Gaumont-British Sound News, which circulates in 1,750 cinemas throughout the British Isles.

Gaumont-British gathers its news from all over the world. In every town of importance in Britain they have their cameramen ready to cover local events. Two tape-machines provide a twenty-four-hour-a-day service in the London office, and in addition there is a network of 4,000 local correspondents ready to 'phone in whenever a story breaks.

Gaumont-British has its own office at Heston Aerodrome with a plane and skilled pilots permanently standing by, ready to take off anywhere and at any time. Incidentally, Gaumont-British News has perfected a system of air distribution to theatres for scoops and specials which enables a total distance of 1,400 miles to be covered in three hours.

Scoops from Abroad

Foreign news is covered in a variety of ways. In all large continental towns and cities Gaumont has a cameraman available to send in stuff whenever required. In America it has a tie-up with Fox Movietone and the Hearst News-reel.

Some of their most brilliant scoops came from abroad. The pictures of King Alexander's assassination were the sort of thing news-reel editors pray for but don't often get. The G.B. man on the spot sent the negative to Paris for developing. Two copies were made, and one sent by air to England and the other by ordinary post to Dover. As was expected, the copies sent by air by G.B. and all the other news-reels were held up by the authorities, but the other copy got through, and G.B. scooped the country.

The famous wireless pictures of the arrival of Scott and Black in Australia provided another triumph for Castleton-Knight and his organisation. The event was shot in Australia, and forty odd frames selected for enlargement. These were wirelessed across one by one, and re-photographed on film in London. The scoop was a world sensation.

News-reels are expensive things to run. G.B.'s weekly budget is about £3,000 for two editions, but that is exclusive of specials. A big event may cost anything up to £2,000 on rights alone. The Scott-Black scoop cost £39 for each picture, and there were forty of them. Cables cost another £220.

Twenty-seven cameramen and five mobile recording trucks are permanently employed by this reel.

The situation concerning exclusives is a little easier now. Formerly, the news-reel companies bid against each other, but as a result of a conference called by the C.E.A. they all agreed for a period of one year to co-operate on big national events.

Gaumont British News on Parade

Soccer League Boycott may follow Cup Final Squabble

This year's Cup Final will go down in history as the Final that was played more in the air than on the ground.

Regarded as one of the big news events of the year, Wembley Stadium decided to keep the News-reels out and film it themselves. The decision must have cost them a lot.

Here is the story. The News-reels between them offered something like £2,000 for the rights to film the game. Wembley Stadium held out for more, so the News people withdrew their first offer and substituted a smaller one. Wembley Stadium retaliated by deciding to make the film themselves, releasing through Featurettes at £12.10.0 a booking. Any News-reel men spotted inside the ground would be thrown out, said the Stadium, and the public were offered rewards to denounce anyone who tried to take in a camera disguised as a parcel of sandwiches.

An injunction was sought to prevent the News-reels producing or distributing shots of the game, and the C.E.A. asked all exhibitors to refuse to book the official film, on the grounds that exhibitors should not have to pay extra money for events that should be supplied by the News-reels in the ordinary way.

The News-reels made their next move by hiring planes and autogyros, and the Stadium tried to stop that, too. But the News-reels are on good terms with the Air Ministry, and no flying ban was issued.

Came the day. Under the command of the intrepid Campbell Black, the flying Armada took the air and the sky was black with long-focus lenses. Everybody got a picture, the cinemas had it by early evening, and democracy was saved.

But watch out for retaliation from the News-reels—reprisals are in the air. "W.F.N." is able to state that at least one News-reel may feel itself compelled next season to boycott all Soccer matches and concentrate on Rugby League fixtures. That move has already started and if the News-reels do go all out to popularise Rugby it will be interesting to see the effect on Soccer attendances.

Have you read Eric Siepmann's film satire

WATERLOO IN WARDOUR STREET ?

PRESENT DAY CINEMA MAGIC INSPIRED BY STAGE JUGGLER

MELIES, USING MOVING MODELS, FORESTALLED THE CARTOON

by L. H. Eisner, our Paris Correspondent

THE word "pioneer" has often been misused in the young history of cinema. Georges Melies, French film producer and director, is more than others entitled to this name. His career seems a film itself.

Search for a Medium

Georges Melies, son of a big shoe-manufacturer, is born in 1861. He wants to become a painter, and works, in Paris, at the Academy. He loves the theatre, is still more interested in jugglery. He becomes director of the Theatre Robert Houdin. There, he creates big shows with dissolving views, illusion tricks, and he juggles himself.

Invited to Lumière's first show of his moving pictures at the Grand Café, in December 1895, he immediately grasps the value of this new invention. He offers 70,000 to 80,000 frs. to Lumière, to buy one of his apparatus, for his theatre. Lumière only thinks of using his invention for scientific purposes; so he does not accept any offer.

The Rewards of Invention

Melies himself is an inventor. He invents his own apparatus and, in 1896, shows his first moving pictures, in his theatre. Thinking of his dissolving views, he tries to improve them, to make one shot fade into the other. (Now, still, he does not like hard "montage." In a time in which others cut in many titles, he tried to avoid them.)

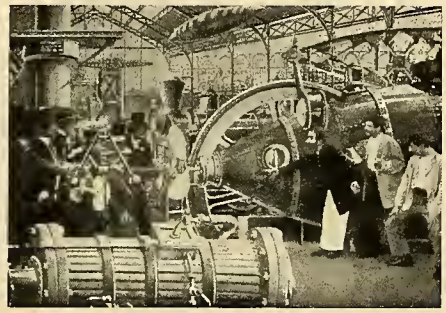
There are no films ready for Melies, so he becomes a producer. In Montreuil, his family house, he builds a sort of photographer's glass-studio. Fair-showmen buy his first small films. But, when he shows them one of his bigger films of about 300 feet length, his *Voyage dans la Lune* (*Journey to the Moon*), nobody wants to pay the 500 frs. he asks for. In the same evening, he takes his film to one of the fair-people and shows it on his own account in his tent. His grosses are 7,000 frs. that night. Now, everybody wants to buy his longer films.

There is no possibility of copyright yet. Americans buy his films, Laemmle first of all. And Laemmle makes as many copies as he likes, stamping his own trade-mark on Melies' films. Melies does not see a cent of the money that Universal makes.

Debt and Destruction

At last, Melies has the idea of creating a branch, over in New York, with his own brother. This branch, Star Films, flourishes, until his brother thinks of shooting wild-west films, like Tom Mix. He loses everything; in 1913, he sells Star Films without telling Melies.

Then, war comes. Theatres do not pay, cinemas neither. He sees no more cash for his films. At Montreuil, his studio and house are requisitioned for military purposes. When war is over, Melies has 300,000 frs. debts. He has



A big set for Moon film

to sell everything, even his films have to be melted down. (If those films are now still preserved in the Los Angeles Film Museum, it is due to a burglary committed in his American branch just before the war. In France, some few films were saved, by mere chance.)

Was Lost and is Found

Melies and his family stick to the theatre. They go with small troupes, through France, for eight years. Then, he resigns. His wife and he sell sweets in a little stand, at Gare Montparnasse, for about twelve years, until one evening, a film journalist passes by and hears his name by chance. He asks him if he is some relation of famous old Melies. At first, he will not believe him. Then, he writes articles about him; there is a big Melies festival.

Repose and Recollection

Now, Melies lives among his old reminiscences, photographs and pictures in the "Maison de retraite du Cinéma," bought for its veterans.

Melies has, of course, made historical films, tragedies and comedies, just like other producers of the early days. But he is the *only one* who found, by instinct and inborn talent, what the cinema really wants: illusion, fantastical scenes, tricks. He is the first to understand that film can show what the theatre never could. Thus, his films have the stamp of unlimited possibilities that films, alas, have lost again. He creates a fantastical world of his own. Long before Fritz Lang, he invents his journey to the moon. His genial tricks and inventions have, since then, been long forgotten and neglected (only the directors of the "Avant Garde" have been able to understand what Melies' art meant to the cinema). Nowadays, only Walt Disney's cartoon world shows a glimpse of the wonders Melies performed with living actors. Phantoms, devils, good ghosts, goblins seem to become reality in the films of Melies. People double, walk out of their bodies, dance on the table next to themselves, as a tiny miniature. A man juggles with his head beneath telegraph-wires, and suddenly his heads seem nothing else but notes in a stave playing "God Save the King." In the *Quatre cent coups du diable* Melies combines theatre with film: all fantastical scenes are shown on the screen. Trunks become a long train, dashing through heaven. There is no single object not full of mischief, and ready to wake up to an extraordinary life. Hell and heaven, the North Pole, the entire universe are the mere playground of his fancy. One of his films is called *Voyage à travers de l'impossible* (*Journey through the Impossible*); his whole art seems to make impossibilities possible.

It is interesting to show how Melies worked.

Trick work by Melies

Each "picture," as he calls it, has been settled beforehand by a detailed text and accurate drawings. Then decorations and side-scenes are put up. He only shoots one of those pictures a day. (His bigger films contain about thirty "pictures" and have about 900 feet.)

Melies' Reconstruction outdoes actual Coronation

One incident may interest, especially in England. When Edward VII was crowned, no cameramen were permitted. Melies reconstructed with the help of photographs, sketches and descriptions of the traditional ceremony, the whole performance, and filmed it with actors. This film was, like many of his films, coloured by hand. It had an enormous success. Edward VII heard about it and had the film shown to him. He was very much interested, and said that it had been even more "detailed" than his real coronation. The king being a little indisposed, the ceremony had been shortened.

PREFACE TO LIFE

Other new films being made

• HOLY ISLAND

• THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

A new documentary film about books, publishers and writers, with leading figures of the literary world, now being made by ALEX SHAW with PAUL ROTHA producing

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RECENT PRODUCTIONS

- *Making the most of our Coal*

  The Official Gas Light and Coke Co. Propaganda Film

- *Four-Mile Death Dive*

  "A tip-top short, splendidly photographed, with a snappy and informative commentary . . thoroughly deserved the big hand it got at the Trade Show."

  Daily Film Renter.

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Education Replaces Sales-Plugging in Latest Advertising Films

PUBLICISE, Publicise and, if possible, amuse, was the old slogan in advertising films. Publicise through education is the new.

The experience of Publicity Films is a fair guide to this movement in the world of public relations. For years Publicity Films has been making advertising films for inclusion in the interludes in theatre programmes. They buy screen time.

Definitely and without apology they recommend face powders, laxatives, and lollipops. They make no pretence at education.

During the past two years the non-theatrical development has affected the policy considerably. There is a growing demand for educational interest films of all kinds: among schools, lecture groups and social organisations. The yearly audience in this field may be as high as ten millions. It is a serious audience worth interesting.

Some government departments—the G.P.O. principally—have exploited this new demand skilfully. Industrial concerns are following eagerly. They are beginning to realise how their own propagandist ends can be served by relating them to serious public interests. They talk now of prestige films and go in for documentary and educational films. They make films of their works and their workers. Except for a limited reference to the sponsoring company there are none of the old blatancies of sales plugging.

Variety

Here is Publicity Films' list. Cadburys have recently made a film, *Sweet Success*, which teaches shopmen how to keep shop: how to sell, stock, keep books, etc. They are now beginning a new programme. There is an interest film of *Trinidad* in Technicolor. Another describes farming from a modern economic standpoint, as an integral part of the country's industries.

A recent film, not very good in itself but a valuable aid in the history classroom, was the centenary film of the Great Western Railway. Its hundred years of railway and social history, though a trifle pompous in manner, is a godsend to teachers who are trying to introduce the social outlook into history teaching.

From recent Cadbury Film

The World Moves On, made for Dunlop rubber, gives a history of wheel transport, and Publicity Films claim that it is a better educational than the G.P.O.'s *History of the Wheel*.

The Historical Association is anxious to make a list of all films which will, in any way, give their teachers a starting point to the discussion of the past. They might note this new development.

More films on interest lines are promised by both Dunlop and Austin. Austins have already made two travelogues of Spain and Ceylon. The brilliant Shell guides suggest that the travelogue is an excellent gambit for transport firms if handled with enough distinction to overcome the proprietary emphasis.

Sponsored Films

Austin's *Men Who Work*, the story of a working man's day in a factory, is well spoken of and this humanising of work offers another good lead. The most successful film made by the E.M.B. (it proved first-class entertainment in over a thousand theatres) was *Industrial Britain*. *Night Mail*, another film of workmen, has recently completed a six weeks' run at the Carlton in London—a record for documentary in the West End—and is booking widely.

The wonders of science, and the accuracies represented by modern production strike the modern imagination increasingly. *Industrial Britain* played strongly on this chord. Publicity Films have followed with *Achievements of Accuracy*, another Austin film.

There the matter rests for the moment, but we suggest another line of attack which may bear equally valuable fruit. Nothing recommends itself these days so much as the joining of sponsorship with a public service. The Gas Association and London Films have shown the way by making *Housing Problems*. Gaumont British Instructional have followed brilliantly by making *Death on the Roads* for the *News of the World*.

But consider the public services which might be related to the publicities attendant on food products, cookery interests, wine interests, soap interests, etc. We shall suggest the possibilities in detail another time. The main lead for the moment is that the formulae governing publicity films are varying, and it is high time.

Here, with all apologies, are some of the older formulae.

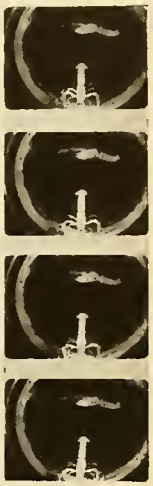
1. The girl applies face powder—consequently marries her boss—goes on honeymoon.

2. Family listen to radio—discuss their favourite stars—mamma likes this one—papa likes that one—and when they are all done, somebody's favourite is so-and-so's cocoa.

3. What were the ten greatest minutes of your life? The airman speaks—war, and a German ace is shot down—the sahib refers to India and a heavy effort in pig-sticking—the old lady remembers the dear dead days over the garden gate—the old fellow in the corner crawls out of the shadow, whips a half-mutchkin from his hip and points to somebody's whisky.

Moholy Nagy completes Lobster Documentary

Moholy Nagy, Hungarian, and maker of abstract films, has recently completed a short documentary on lobsters.



The film was made at various points on the English coast and important sequences were shot with the collaboration of Professor Daniels, principal of the marine biological station in Port Erin, Isle of Man. A daylight water tank was used for detail pictures.

The first version of the film was 2,400 feet long, but subsequently 1,000 feet were cut.

The musical score is by Arthur Benjamin, who is reported to have been greatly puzzled by the problem of underlining the activities of the tiny new-hatched lobsters.

"*World Moves On*" (*Ralph Smart*)

Ralph Smart, director of *The World Moves On*, is twenty-eight years old. He has been in films for some time and has directed propaganda films for the Social Hygiene Council, the Boy Scouts' Association, and Levers.

He was assistant to Anthony Asquith in *Cottage on Dartmoor* and has also worked in the scenario and production departments of Gaumont-British, M.G.M., and United Artists.

FILM SOCIETIES

HOLLAND:

Nine years ago, Joris Ivens founded the Film Liga. In this organisation he assembled hundreds of enthusiasts from all over the country. In his tiny theatre they gathered to see the latest developments in cinema.

He did, in effect, found an Amateur Movement —a movement of independent film-makers, who were not content with theory alone. René Clair, Cavalcanti and Eisenstein delivered lectures in Amsterdam. The amateurs were busy with their cameras. Their subjects were the sea and the slums alike of their native country.

Since 1933, there has been nothing to take the place of the Film Liga. But its work has not been in vain. Films such as Rutten's *Dead Water* and—more recently—*Young Hearts*, the work of two enterprising young men, are an indication that their influence is being felt to-day —an influence which urges that the life and occupations and surroundings of ordinary people are a worthy subject for the screen.

MACLAREN WIRES:

"I wish to let you know that owing to the swiftly changing international situation, we have dropped all plans. Instead we start making immediately, before anything else, an intense propaganda film for *action* against the forces leading to international war—for exposing the armament racket—for emphasising ghastliness of mass-slaughter—for urging every person who sees the film to *act*, and to show just what kinds of action he or she can take.

"The film is designed to be seen primarily by working class audiences. We start shooting on the 1st May, and complete the film by July 31st."

SUDBURY:

Over 100 people, including representatives from the local and trade Press, were present at the opening of the Sudbury Amateur Film Society's new theatre recently. A party from the British Film Institute Society were also amongst the audience.

W.F.N.——————————W.F.N.

At the recent Conference of the Federation of Film Societies, representing the nineteen leading Film Societies in Great Britain, "World Film News" was appointed the official organ of the Federation. We acknowledge the honour and salute a movement which, with a proper contempt for magnates and mugwumps, has made the wide appreciation of the art of cinema possible.

GLASGOW:

Glasgow Film Society is the second oldest and second largest in the country. It was founded, shortly after the London Society, by D. Paterson Walker (who is still its secretary), Stanley L. Russell and Charles Fraser. The inaugural meeting was attended by thirteen. Its first performances were held in the private basement theatre of First-National Pathé. The first film shown was *Caligari*.

The present chairman is C. A. Oakley, lecturer in Industrial Psychology in Glasgow University, who took a prominent part in the formation of the Scottish Film Council (the representative body of the British Film Institute in Scotland), of which he is now joint honorary secretary.

Stanley L. Russell, who continues to serve on the Council, is also honorary secretary of the Meteor Film Producing Society, one of the most ambitious and successful amateur units in the country. He was instrumental in organising the Scottish Amateur Film Festival, and is chairman of the Amateur Cinematography Panel of the Scottish Film Council.

An interesting feature of the Society is its magazine programme, which contains recommendations of films shown commercially in Glasgow, short articles, and a members' forum for discussion.

FEDERATION

The following are the principal resolutions adopted at the recent conference of the Federation of British Film Societies. These will now be passed to individual societies for agreement.

The Federation agrees to co-operate with the London Film Society in the importation of one feature film and several short films in the season.

Film societies affiliated to the Federation should make their bookings through the Federation, unless otherwise instructed by the Secretary of the Federation.

The Secretary of the Federation shall prepare and issue, prior to the beginning of each new season, a list of films available to member societies.

It was agreed that additional information relating to the affairs of the Federation, apart from the bulletin on available films, should be published monthly in "World Film News."

It was agreed to call a conference of secretaries of member societies prior to the beginning of each season, in order to discuss films and booking arrangements.

MANANA DE LA MANANA

By Basil Wright

Ibiza, the least known and least spoilt of the Balearic Islands, is notable for its Moorish traditions which have persisted through seven centuries of Spanish domination. Its architecture bears an astonishing resemblance to the work of the modern functional designers.

Some weeks ago I went, with John Taylor, to shoot a short documentary of the island for Thorold Dickinson's "Fact and Fantasy" series.

Before leaving London we were assured by the Spanish authorities that there would be no objection to our filming Ibiza.

We found an ancient walled city showing strong Moroccan influence. In the citadel was a small garrison of the comic-opera type. The first two days we spent taking shots around the garrison, watched by sleepy but quite interested sentries.

On the third day, a plain-clothes policeman, with one eye, arrested us in a café, and announced that our camera and all our exposed film must be handed over to the Commandante of the garrison. We gave him the camera and 200 feet of unexposed colour film. The exposed film we put with the cockroaches under the bed.

Days passed. Our morning visit to the Commandante became part of the barracks routine. Nothing happened. In despair we cabled the Generalissimo in Majorca. But he was Spanish, too, and had passed the buck to the War Office at Madrid.

We took to fishing, halma, ludo, poker, dice, and other vices.

We cabled London. The Foreign Office took up the matter and soon replied that all was

IBIZENKIAN CHURCH

arranged. This, however, had no apparent effect on the Madrid lotus-eaters.

Finally, when the Army had returned from its lengthy Easter siesta, the Commandante at Ibiza sent for us, and after keeping us waiting for only forty-five minutes, informed us that we might shoot. But only the churches.

Never has the meaning of the word church been so elastically interpreted. At times it almost amounted to blasphemy. But, in any case, the film was made.

My only regret is that we have no film record of the Commandante's soldiers drilling. They were a cross between Laurel and Hardy and the soldiers in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*.

THE FILM AND PHOTO LEAGUE

invites the co-operation of men and women who desire to produce pictures dealing with the real life and aspirations of the vast mass of British citizens to-day. The League aims at producing films and photographs of social and cultural value, and at co-ordinating the activities of individuals and organisations sympathetic to these aims. It also organises lectures, debates, shows etc., among its activities. Join us — our new address is

4a PARTON STREET, RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1

IVOR MONTAGU STATES CASE FOR SPECIALISED SHOWINGS

The Cinematograph Films Act of 1929 is about to expire and be renewed. Recommendations have been invited for its revision. The Act was drafted with looseness and inexperience, and had consequences in the film world quite outside the purpose of its sponsors—the encouragement of British production. It is particularly in these directions that revision is desirable.

An unforeseen consequence has been the handicapping of the "high-brow" or "artistic" film. Everyone is aware that films are made abroad which, however popular in their country of origin, are, owing to difference of cultural conception and tradition (tragic ending, "realistic" treatment, and the like), or—particularly since the introduction of talkies—of language, not popular audience pictures for this country. Yet it is, I think, generally agreed that the occasional limited showing of such films in this country is wholly good.

Not only have new technical influences been introduced thereby into the industry, but as the trade itself has often emphasised, new audiences, new social strata have thereby been introduced into the cinemas, widening and sophisticating the public taste.

For a time the work of this showing was effected exclusively by film societies. Later these were reinforced by the specialised theatres. **This development has been generally commended, in the reports of public bodies such as the British Film Institute, by educational authorities; and yet against it the Cinematograph Act of 1929 struck a crippling blow.**

FORMAL REGISTRATION

The Act, it must be appreciated, imposes a quota not only upon exhibitors but upon renters. There is no reason why these specialised theatres should not exhibit a quota of British films. They do. **But the Act imposes a middle-man.** If a specialised theatre exhibit a film, even if it propose to give the only exhibition of the film in England and obtain it and return it direct to and from the maker, it must make arrangement for formal registration by some renter. No renter will lightly use up his foreign quota upon a film which, from the start, is expected to book to only one or at most two theatres.

What is the solution? It is impossible for a specialised theatre exhibitor himself to start a formal renting organisation and produce or acquire the necessary equivalent of British films. The renting income of the high-brow film for a single show is less than a hundred pounds, whereas the cost of acquisition or production of a British film runs into many thousands. To expect this course would be to declare that no man may show one high-brow film, even for a week, unless he be prepared to invest many thousands of pounds, and overheads, in a renting and producing business, precisely as though he were in regular business as a distributor of foreign popular films. Yet it is precisely this requisition that the Cinematograph Act now makes.

How then do the specialised theatres now exist? On the one hand they occasionally persuade big companies, with a superabundance of British quota, to take on a high-brow film that looks as though with luck it might have a wider distribution than to high-brow theatres only. This of course results in a tendency whereby the primary purpose of these special theatres, experiment, is discouraged, and factors quite other than the tastes of their own audiences inhibit enterprise.

RENTER'S LICENCE

But it is not too much to say that these theatres have been made possible only by the Film Society, which, early realising the position, informed the Board of Trade that it proposed to take out a renter's licence, formally register and act purely *pro forma* as renter for exceptional films for such theatres, and invite prosecution should the Board of Trade disapprove its activities. But for this action such a film as *Madchen in Uniform* would probably never have been shown in this country. Originally requisitioned by the Film Society, it was of course transferred to a "business" renter when it turned out a popular success.

Here the Board of Trade has given no undertaking not to prosecute, but with some generosity and understanding it has in fact not prosecuted, indicating that it has refrained from doing so where the *pro forma* renter has confined his sponsorship to that of a single showing, and not engaged in the business of pushing his wares up and down the country. This in itself is a crippling compromise, however, since from every cultural and educational point of view it is as desirable that an "artistic" film should be shown in Glasgow or Manchester as in benighted London, when and if ever enough people can be found to endure it.

EXEMPTION?

What is the solution? British producing interests cannot in any way be hostile to the occasional showing of these films, for a film unpopular enough to be stood by only two or three audiences cannot possibly be regarded as competing with home production. Why not exemption therefore?

The high-brow film, even if coming over to a single private society show for no hiring fee, already pays the same penny a foot protective duty that is paid by a super-production taking a couple of hundred thousand pounds out of the country. If not exemption, no one would object to some imposition in favour of British production, to be paid, perhaps, to the Film Institute or the G.P.O., so long as it were graduated to the earning capacity of the high-brow film, not as now, in practice many thousands as against an income of, maybe, less than hundreds.

NO AMBIGUITY

The principle of exemption for the film of educational or cultural effect is already part-admitted by the exemption from foreign quota restriction of films "consisting wholly or mainly of natural scenery, industrial processes" and so forth. The only revision necessary is the addition to this category of the "artistic" film. And there would be no possibility of ambiguity or evasion.

Definition is very easy. *Let the exemption be extended to any film that is exhibited in public for a total collectively in all theatres in which it may be shawn of* **ten weeks or less in any one year.** Such a period would be ample to allow the longest likely success for any high-brow film in London, and give a margin for the movement to crusade for one, or even two, struggled-for shows in the provinces besides.

No foreign film booking to a maximum of ten weeks of booking in a year could possible injure British production, nor could a quota-evading business possibly be founded upon films with such a limitation.

New Anomaly of the Quota Act

One of the consequences of the Quota Act is the rendering illegal of the "try-out," or unheralded exhibition to a sample public of a film in unfinished state. This process enables its makers to learn which parts of a film are dull or do not "get over" to an unprepared audience, and to cut or amend the finished film accordingly. There is no process so efficacious in securing "polish," especially in comedy. It is almost universally practised in America. The Act renders it illegal and thus deprives British production —in the letter of the law—of a great advantage.

The Board of Trade, on its attention being drawn to this point, intimated through its solicitors that it would initiate no prosecutions, in other words, not enforce the law. It is obviously desirable that this restraint, though commonsensical, should be made unnecessary by a revision.

SPANIARDS PUZZLED BY METRO'S AUDIOSCOPIKS

The latest film novelty is three-dimensional cine-photography. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have produced a short called AUDIOSCOPIKS, by Leventhol and Norling, with commentary by Pete Smith. It has already been trade-shown in this country, and should be getting into the theatres any time now. It has already gone to the public in Barcelona.

In some places it seems to have caused excitement—the effect of squirting soda-water and firing revolvers straight into the audience being reminiscent of the panic caused by a train steaming on to the screen in the nickelodeon days.

AUDIOSCOPIKS is claimed to be the first short ever to get a world pre-view première at Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, and the usual predictions followed that it was going to revolutionise screen technique. However, from all accounts, the picture is little more than a bunch of tricks.

How it Works

Stereoscopy, the sense of depth that is the normal condition of two-eyed vision, is the result of unconscious superimposition of two different images, each received by one eye. To get this effect photographically, two different images must be photographed, and projected simultaneously on to the screen. Each image must be received by one eye only of the spectator.

In *AUDIOSCOPIKS* the method used was as follows: two cameras were joined together with their lenses eye-distance apart. Two different negatives were thus obtained corresponding to the two different images received by the eyes.

The two negatives were then printed on to a single positive, one being printed in green, the other in red. This composite red and green print is called an anaglyph, and when projected is a blur, since the red and green pictures do not exactly coincide. To give the picture life, the audience is served out with cardboard spectacles, having one eye-piece green, one red; by this means each eye receives one image only, and the result is claimed to be a stereoscopic picture.

Reports Conflict

Conflicting reports are: "*AUDIOSCOPIKS* is running at a small news-reel theatre in Barcelona. General impression from two viewings is that it is nothing to shout about, and that the effect obtained is only stereoscopic in patches. Objects seem only to appear three-dimensional when they approach very near to the camera. The background seems to remain strictly two-dimensional. The film is devoted only to the more obvious tricks, such as the effect of a trombone slide being poked towards the camera, or a girl squirting a siphon at the audience. The Barcelona audience reaction was lukewarm, but it must be remembered that the Pete Smith commentary was lost on them."—*W.F.N. Spanish Correspondent.*

"Audience enthusiastically acclaimed this novelty short as the greatest entertainment ever to be presented on any screen."—*Bob Smith, of Grauman's Chinese Theatre, in a cable to Pete Smith.*

"As a distinctive novelty that gives new thrills, *Audioscopiks* should excite much comment . . . Seltzer is made to squirt from a siphon directly into your eye, a base-ball is hurled directly at your head, and a mouse crawls on the hair of the person sitting in front of you. When Pete Smith finishes having his fun with these objects, he takes you on an automobile ride, which is so realistic that everyone involuntarily lurches forward as the car pulls up short behind a truck." —*Motion Picture Daily.*

DUTCH SOUND SYSTEM FOR AMATEURS

Multifilm, a Dutch firm operating in Haarlem, has introduced a new machine for 16 mm. sound recording designed on professional lines. Hitherto, 16 mm. recording has mostly been confined to recording the sound on the same film as the picture.

Multifilm allows recording of the sound on a separate film, ultimately to be combined with the picture in the show copy by printing.

Mathematicians to make Movies

ROBERT FAIRTHORNE, research-man and mathematician attached to the Royal Aircraft establishments at Farnborough, and Brian Salt, now with G.B.I., are embarking on the independent production of mathematical films. They are planning to develop a purely visual notation.

Their aim is to make mathematical conceptions visually apparent, thus bringing the teaching of mathematics into line with the teaching, by the use of models and diagrams, of mechanics, statics and dynamics. Among other things, it is hoped that the films will present in concrete form problems which students now only too often learn to solve by rule-of-thumb methods, and without appreciation of their general significance.

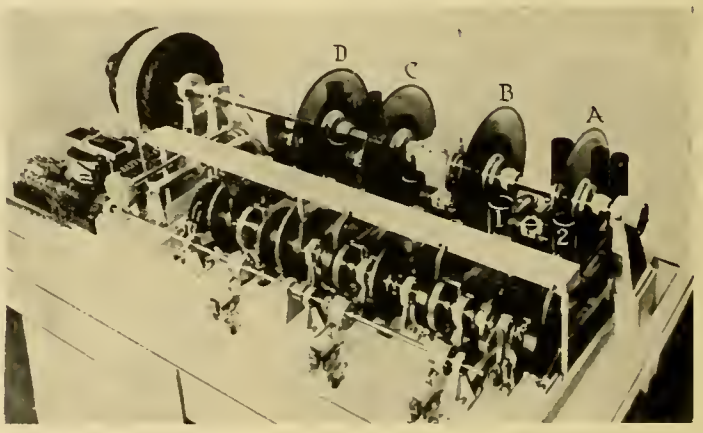
The films are intended for higher-grade mathematical students (though we hope that Fairthorne and Salt will not forget the needs of children just starting their first lessons in arithmetic and the decimal system). Among other things they will present the general aspects of different types of differential equations. It is understood that prints (35 mm. or 16 mm.) will be available at cost to those who require them.

HERE IS THE TALKING CLOCK

A, B, C and D are transparent revolving sound discs.

At either side of each disc is an exciter lamp (1) *and corresponding photo-electric cell* (2).

Between the two is a lens marked



Andrew Buchanan is shortly to include in his Gaumont *Cinemagazine* an item dealing with the Post Office's new *Talking Clock*.

This automatic voice, designed and built at the Post Office's Dollis Hill Research Station, will make its first public appearance on July 1st. From that day on, when a telephone user dials T I M, the Girl with the Golden Voice will tell him the time to an accuracy of one-tenth of a second.

Each time-announcement is built up from certain phrases such as "At the third stroke," "it will be," and "precisely," with the hours, minutes and seconds appropriately interspersed. The actual time is indicated by the last of three "pips," similar to the B.B.C. time signal.

The phrases and the hours, minutes and seconds are contained on four concentric sound tracks re-recorded from film on to revolving glass plates. Light-beams are focussed on the sound tracks, and the light passing through the plates falls on to photo-electric cells. Reproduction of the speech is effected by means similar to those used in cinemas. The resulting volume is sufficient to supply two hundred telephones.

The clock is to be housed in the "Tandem" Toll exchange in Holborn.

Fox "Magic Carpet" Series Tops the Bill for Travel

Isaac James continues his discussion on travelogues begun in last month's issue.

A progressive step toward better travel films was taken by the Brothers Warner when they engaged the services of Newman, the world-famous traveller and lecturer. Unfortunately, Newman was not given the best in technical assistance. He had the originality to arrange his pictures by subject rather than by locality. But the high speed required to make the films move along without monotony left no time for the charming, instructive, understanding little talks with which he used to accompany them when he showed them from the lecture platform.

The best part of Newman's contribution was therefore lost, but at least the series proves that an experienced traveller knows where to look for colour, for human interest, for vital subjects, and knows how to tell about them when he gets home.

News Service Production

The best of all travel film series, to my mind, was that produced by the Fox Film Corporation under the title of *The Magic Carpet*.

For a long time these were made by members of Fox News Service stationed in various parts of the world. The newsmen knew their job photographically, and remained in remote places long enough to gather a great deal of usable material, or else had time enough to wait for something interesting to happen.

The best travel film I have ever seen, it had for subject China's Yellow River, was produced in this way. In ten minutes it managed to convey an amazing number of varied facts about the cities through which the river flows, the people who live and work along its banks, and the countryside to which it brings both fortune and disaster.

Every sequence was visually brilliant, dramatically moving, and a record of some type of pertinent action. It reproduced both beauty and horror, but both were palatable and of engaging interest.

As is usual in such affairs, the man or men who made it were not mentioned in the credit title, and so I take this opportunity of paying tribute to the nameless artist.

Feature Length Subjects

There are also sporadic attempts made by the major film companies to present travel films of feature length. One might suppose that the added time would offer opportunities for more thorough and satisfying treatment, but other difficulties are encountered. The Martin Johnsons, who are certainly pioneers in natural history recording, are apt to pad their African pictures with long portions that are of no interest to non-big-game hunters.

Most producers feel that a long film must have a plot, and many so-called "expedition" films merely provide an exciting setting for an unusually vapid story.

Emphasis is often placed on misleading material in order to achieve fake thrills, and normal customs are rejected as being undramatic.

Van Dyke was lucky in having Peter Freuchen's *Eskimo* as a basis for his Arctic picture; Flaherty, probably the highest touted of all travel directors, seems to scorn his luck, and threw away Synge's "Aran Islands" when he made his picture about an Irish shark. In the old silent days Schoedsack and Cooper brought back really intelligent films from the Near East, but both of those adventuresome spirits have departed to happier hunting grounds in Hollywood.

The Film Explorer

It's about time we had a new school of reporting explorer, who would fearlessly scour our civilisations with both camera and microphone, and whose talents will encompass both these extremely complicated arts, travelling and film-

C. W. Herbert made most af the "Magic Carpet" series for Fox. Is now an "March of Time"

making. For since the capital requirements are comparatively small, many young people choose the travel field as the place to begin their film apprenticeships; in spite of the absence of the technical aids provided in even the most primitive studios, and in spite of the added difficulties in the selection and arrangement of material.

Long ago, the American philosopher, Emerson, made the point that a traveller can take away from a country only what he brings there. We need travel film producers with culture, background, tempered senses of human value, taste and the knack of making movies. Here, if anywhere, are we confronted with an art in which creation is essentially criticism. Unfortunately, most men blessed with the ability to express universal criticism in the motion picture have found secure niches in the world's film centres.

The Travel Film of the Future

Perhaps the day of the travel film is over. We can still learn much about strangers from the films they produce in their own countries. Barring language difficulties, this may even be the best way. But if we are to send emissaries we had better do it quickly; for the Fox Company has announced the discontinuance of the *Magic Carpet* division, and M.G.M. has given Fitzpatrick new contracts for a series in colour.

You remember the colouring of post-cards did nothing to inspire the messages written on their backs. What travel films need is sharpening and contrast; the addition of colour will only blur and besmudge the real issues.

A view of the Eiffel Tower, even though the background is a blue spring sky, is no longer worth the price of a glass of beer to most of us. If we are to leave our Battersea hearths we might as well travel *de luxe*.

News-reel Clips

Pity some of the boys can't find a few new angles for the Boat Race. Footage dull as the race.

* * *

Good work by Movietone on trial flight of new Zepp. Special ten-minute reel issued, intelligently shot.

* * *

March of Time reel now plays in 6,600 theatres throughout the world—720 of them in Great Britain.

* * *

Duff-Cooper's recruiting speech for G.B. News was badly received in a number of cinemas. The Peace people seem to mean business.

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COCKALORUM

"W.F.N.'s" aureole of bird-seed is awarded this month to the drama critic of the "News Chronicle" for the following sentence:—

"Without wishing to detract from the popularity of the entertainment I was astonished by the decency of their clothing."

* * *

"English companies are still under the impression that no film is worth producing unless it drags in a shower-bath or bath-tub scene. Indulgence of this childish obsession involves the risk of losing important and essential dialogue." —(*Mr. Cresswell O'Reilly, the chief Australian Commonwealth film censor, in his annual report, quoted by "The Cinema".*)

* * *

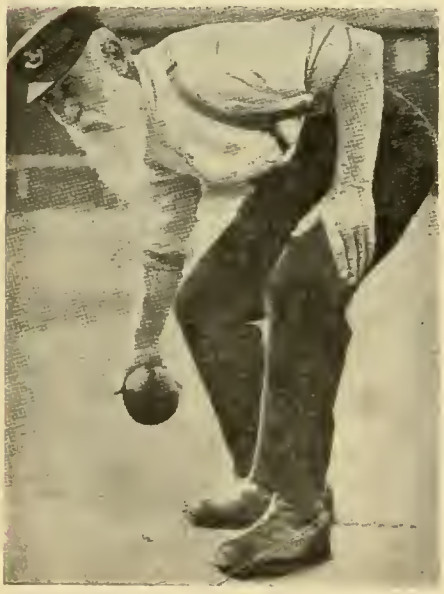
The Reverend Father John O'Donnell has served for many years as ecclesiastical technical adviser on M.G.M. productions.

What does he do on Sundays?

* * *

"I resent anyone who has ever been mean to Mr. von Sternberg. I cross them from my list of friends. I stare at them like so much glass."

Marlene Dietrich.



Veteran Exhibitor expresses his opinion of Movie Business

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"Controversial?"

DANIEL DEFOE ON THE EMIGRES

"I have indeed heard my father say that he was pestered with a great many of those who for any religion they had might e'en have stayed where they were, but who flocked over hither in droves for what they call in English a livelihood; hearing with what open arms the refugees were received in England, and how they fell readily into business, being by the charitable assistance of the people in London encouraged to work in their manufactures, and that they had a much better price for their work than in France and the like."—1724.

* * *

"I'm a right guy. But this talk of marriage—marriage—marriage is driving me nuts."

Joan Crawford.

Sayings of the Month:

"OH, it's silly, I suppose, but I'd like to make a film of 'Wuthering Heights.' I've always wanted to play Emily. And then there's 'St. Joan' and, perhaps, 'Mary Rose.' And 'Shirley.'" NOVA PILBEAM.

"ONE should not look at films after eating." BERT BRECHT.

"I am glad to get away from the darkness of the Censor's sin filter to see beautiful pictures in broad daylight."

J. A. MONTGOMERY, I.F.S. Film Censor.

MASTER-STROKE BY "SCREENCOMBER" IN *KINE WEEKLY.*

"For various reasons Ramon Novarro always reminds me of a deer. Not only is Ramon swift and graceful, but his eyes are the gentle black, beautiful eyes of the charming forest creature."

—From an article in *Picture Play.*

James, my gun!

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How far this method of tracing missing executives is successful is a debated point. But it gives welcome relief in conferences. Between argument, confabulators lay odds on which number will turn up next, backing their favourite.

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Music in Films and Radio—each month a famous composer gives his views on this important subject.

Those are some of the things W.F.N. has told you about in this, and previous issues. Here are some new features that are making their appearance with our next:—

Forecasts for the Filmgoer—what there is to see this month AND NEXT.

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A REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN ENGLAND TO-DAY

—in industry, housing and the home. We are moving towards better working conditions, healthier and more comfortable homes. The film shows how applied science is easing life for men and women alike. It takes us from Sheffield to the Cotswolds; from Wythenshawe to the Great West Road; it visits housing estates in town and country; it shows the beginning of a new England.

A FILM ABOUT COOKING

This is a big step towards good nutrition. Two famous chefs show the art of cooking simple things. One prepares a meal such as you yourself could produce at home. Another reveals many of those secret ways of doing ordinary things which are known as chefs' tips and are never found in cookery books. And it's not just straight cookery—a humorist gets into the kitchen with the chef!

GETTING INTO HOT WATER

People don't realise just what trouble and annoyance is caused in every household where there is not enough hot water. Mr. Therm makes his first appearance as a star on the screen, and solves all their difficulties with his new water heaters. This is a sensible film about a real problem, but cheerfulness and music keep breaking in.

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The Genius of Peter Lorre

By GRAHAM GREENE

IT WAS IN Fritz Lang's *M* that Peter Lorre first captured attention, captured it with horrifying vividness as a child murderer. Nobody who saw that film could fail to realise that he might be watching a great actor; might be, because the filmgoer learns caution, because he needs more than one film to tell how much credit is due to the director, because he has been deceived often by a lucky part into believing that a Scarlet Empress is a Blue Angel.

But we were right when we thought there was more than a brilliant melodramatic director behind Lorre. There was nothing of the bogey, the lighted turnip, the Karloff about his performance: I still remember the expression of despairing tenderness he turned on his small victim, the hopeless struggle in his face against a habit he could not break.

He exhibited the same sympathetic grasp of a psychological "case" in his third film, the rather inferior melodrama of Karl Freund's, *The Hands of Orlac*. He acted the part of the depraved surgeon Gogol who grafts the hands of a guillotined murderer on to the smashed stumps of his rival. A part you would have said of cheap Grand Guignol horror, something to frighten children, and a reading of the script would not have altered your view. It was to Lorre alone we owed the goodness, the tenderness of the vicious man. Those marble pupils in the pasty spherical head are like the eye-pieces of a microscope through which you can watch the tangled mind laid flat on the slide: love and lust, nobility and perversity, hatred of itself and despair jumping out at you from the jelly. His very features are metaphysical.

Lorre has run the usual course, from Germany to America and then to England, but in his case it is not the chart of a rising and then falling reputation. He has never failed, although he has never appeared in a good film since *M*. His nearest approach to failure was in Hitchcock's *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. He was given a perfunctory Peter the Painter part, but the director was too proud of his little melodramatic tricks to be interested in character.

Lorre—perhaps it is a misfortune—can do almost anything. He is a genius who sometimes gets his finest effects independently of his director (as I have said there is nothing in the script to explain his Gogol, the seriousness he introduced into the trivial film), but he is also a thoroughly reliable repertory actor, and so in his last film, Hitchcock's deplorable *Secret Agent*, he made a great success of a humorous 'character' part. There was no doubt there about his humour and the gusto with which he acted, and Hitchcock deserves some credit for developing the hint of comic powers observable in Sternberg's glossy popular *Crime and Punishment*, when as Raskolnikov he bated his sister's pompous suitor. It was a cheap little piece of comic relief, but Lorre got from it every possible laugh.

But that is not the Lorre one most wants to see: better Gogol a thousand times, and I have a horrible fear that film directors will find it easier to follow in Hitchcock's steps and provide Lorre with humorous character parts than discover stories to suit his powerful genius, his overpowering sense of spiritual corruption. He is an actor of great profundity in a superficial art. It will always be his fate to be cramped, not only by the shortcomings of directors, not only by the financiers with their commercial demands, but by the Board of Film Censors. The financiers are not interested in psychological truth, and the Board do not recognise morality.

Secret Agent

M

Studio Portrait

Crime and Punishment

Sack the Lot!

WARDOUR STREET'S CENSOR BOARD—the tame committee which the film trade retains to preserve it from the deeper forms of immorality—is in the wars again. In fact, the Board of Censors is rather too often in the wars these days. Wardour Street will have to do something about it. It may even have to get a new Censor Board. The present one with its too aged mind and too palsied hand is becoming embarrassing. Schlerosis of judgment has set in, and pensioning off would appear to be an act of kindness.

Once upon a time the Censor Board was content to deal with morals, or what it thought was morals. In this capacity, it achieved some remarkable feats of moral distinction. It permitted leggery *ad lib*—or as near *lib* as makes no matter—but eliminated the Lord's Prayer from a serious film on cathedrals. It allowed Dietrich to slip through an act of nudery by disguising herself 'on the cut' as her own statue, but with awesome delicacy cut the reference to the devil in the song "Get thee behind me Satan." The result was, more or less, "Get thee behind me—click."

These adventures in the moral judgment would have surprised the great philosophers, but no one worried very much. If one saw a blind man being led down Wardour Street, "There," one said from the window, "goes the Board of Censors." And it could not matter much, for the industry was on infant legs and serious problems were never likely to arise. Few films had the Lord's Prayer to cut and few films invited the devil to do anything but get in front of them.

But time changes, the film marches on and matters of serious import arise. The films are getting nearer to reality. In America they are already touching on social problems and to-morrow they will be touching on them here. At the American end, through Will Hays, the film men are proud to touch in their stories on the great problems of peace and work. To-morrow we in England shall be proud too.

The Censor Board in England does not apparently know what is happening. It recently held up a peace film with monumental clumsiness, it even talked of referring it to the War Office. It recently cut down a discussion of Britain's relation to the League of Nations though not an element in the treatment was outside the run of the ordinary news.

We have heard it said that the Board of Censors represents the servants' hall of the Conservative Central Office, but this would be to offer an unwarrantable insult to the Conservative Party. It would be smarter than to talk of referring a peace film to the War Office. However this may be, it will be dangerous for the film trade if it is representative of any party at all. It will be worse still if the irresponsible councils of political hangers-on are permitted to influence it.

The film has a great role to perform within the limits of an entertainment policy, and has as much to do for the public welfare as the B.B.C. Already there are signs that it appreciates its national duty. It will not do this duty well if its servants on the Censor Board lead it into political embarrassment.

Children's Films

EXHIBITORS IN this country complain that their choice of films for children's programmes is becoming more and more limited. Nevertheless they continue to organise juvenile audiences and therefore they must shoulder the responsibility to them.

A half-hearted attempt to provide programmes vaguely suitable for children is not good enough. If children like adventure films they should be shown specially edited versions of current Westerns. But exhibitors cannot be expected to know what appeals to children. For this knowledge they should go for advice to the child specialists, not to the figure-heads of educational and juvenile organisations, but to the rank and file of teachers and parents who are in daily contact with the child mind and who have enough knowledge and imagination to look at a film through the eyes of an eight-year-old.

The exhibitor seems to have forgotten that to a child reality can be as dramatic and entertaining as fantasy and make-believe. Children have more sympathy for a lamb that has lost its mother than for Pluto in distress, and the chicken that tries to swallow the worm too large for its capacity is a first-class comedian.

This country has a wealth of short interest films with subjects ranging from sea-anemones to coal mines which, with the exception of a few experimentalists, have been forgotten by the exhibitors.

Here Go Our Flags

WITH THIS NUMBER *World Film News* goes to double size and takes its place with the luxurious monthlies which strike at you from the bookstalls and charge you a shilling.

From all over, we have been asked for more—for larger articles, for a wider range of services. We recognise that the demand is a genuine one. Trade journals and fan magazines direct your romantic attention to the star-spangled heavens. We, *ventre à terre*, head in air, combine realism with the romance. We recognise that films are not only a matter of stars and publicities, but of men and ideas.

And cinema is a wider world than the trade journals and fan magazines will recognise. It has audiences in art and education, and the social services as well as in simple entertainment. It is these new audiences we are asked increasingly to serve. We do so happily.

Here go our flags, and—as Arthur Dent has brightly said of us—"they are all tendentious towards good causes." It is for you now to wave your own little shilling flags. They are part of the show.

WE ARE DISAPPOINTED THAT

The Film Trade did not get together over quota recommendations to the Moyne Committee.

* * *

There is no sign of an immediate return to the single-feature programme.

world FILM news

JULY 1936

Editor: MARION A. GRIERSON

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British Film Industry Faces Crisis

While luncheons at the Savoy and Dorchester can still be bought and glamorous first nights flood the London night, while the trumpetings of publicity departments fill the air, the moving finger slowly writes and rumbles of approaching doom are heard in the corridors of Wardour Street.

British film production faces impending troubles of some magnitude. The overbuilding of cinemas, which has inspired discussions between the Kinematograph Renters Society and the Cinematograph Exhibitors Association, progresses slowly compared with the speed at which new studios are being built.

Thirty new stages* are either in the building or completed. The problem is where the stages will get film productions to support them.

The studios of London Film Productions at Denham, which cost £750,000 to build, head the list with nine stages built, and space for six more, likely to be built at the end of the year.

The new Pinewood studios at Iver, Bucks, which have been financed by the Lord Portal interests, cost £1,000,000 in *de luxe* fittings with six stages and space for more. The Lord Portal interests are also behind C. M. Woolf's General Film Distributors.

Many other independent building enterprises are in progress round London, while a number of studios like Julius Hagen's at Twickenham are extending existing space.

The problem facing the production companies at the moment is gross over-expenditure on film production and on overheads. It is generally admitted in the film trade that a collapse is imminent and that it may come any time within the next six months. Vast sums have been spent on films that have flopped on the second night in the West End.

After many years' refusal to finance films, the City suddenly loosed its purse strings a couple of years back. But it loosed them indiscriminately, and it is no exaggeration to say that certain film companies in this country obtained money on false pretences. Groups of charlatans and incompetents from every other film production centre have gathered in Wardour Street.

Great luncheons have been staged, glittering premières arranged, sheafs of publicity scattered broadcast. Studios are being erected regardless of production needs. Thousands are spent and the films, the marketable commodity, have been scarcely saleable propositions.

The position is not likely to affect the well organised and well financed companies, but it will undoubtedly hit a great many independent companies.

The City has heard at last that all is not well and there has been a withdrawal of finance from certain quarters. At least one of the big groups backing British films is now demanding a better assurance of financial return.

Of the thirty new stages the greater proportion is unlikely to earn its keep.

Korda's organisation has contracts for letting its stages to independent film producing companies, and the same applies to Pinewood. This should make a profit. Pinewood has a certain chain of production companies who will have to produce there, as the studios will be closely linked with the distribution financiers.

With the others, though, it is distinctly dubious.

* Stage—there are usually two to six stages in a studio. A stage can usually accommodate two drawing-room sets.

Sydney Horler Horrified by British Scripts

BY DENIS MYERS

"If you ask me where British films principally fall down, it's in their scenarios." That's what Sydney Horler, the man who stepped into Edgar Wallace's shoes, thriller writer with a three million public, told me.

In his study, one that Edgar Wallace would have loved, complete with shining dictaphone and affectionately signed photographs, he leaned back and looked through the windows at the British Museum outside.

"Production, technique, artists (except for actresses, and they are terrible), equipment, they have got all these," he went on, "but those scripts they shoot from"—Sydney Horler shook his head more in sorrow than in anger.

British producers seem, according to him, to have absorbed the vices of Hollywood without their virtues. The time-wasting, the conferences, the money poured out on material which is never used . . . those things happen over here, too.

"Who are the scenario writers in England?" Mr. Horler asked the British Museum. The British Museum did not reply; Mr. Horler did.

"They are, generally speaking, the unsuccessful playwrights, journalists, friends of 'someone in the ring.' It's all very sad and—bad business.

[*Howard Coster*

Sydney Horler

"Mind you, I've no grievances. I've done and am doing scenarios myself, but what happens to them?" the Horler's eyes twinkled. "They read them, they say 'Thanks old boy, that's fine, just what we want'; they pay for them, and they use the title and scrap the rest."

"But don't Hollywood do the same?" I asked.

"Sure . . . I mean, certainly," said Horler the adaptable, "but Hollywood improves. Did you see *The Unguarded Hour?* As a play, it was . . ." He grimaced at the pigeons outside. "but as a film done by M.G.M. it was a grand show.

"Hollywood is recognising now that the scenario writer is of paramount . . . no publicity pun intended . . . importance. Why," he sounded wistful, "they are even giving a little prominence to the writers' names.

"But here . . . go down and have a look at *Two's Company*. I grant you that there's very little resemblance in the film to the original book of mine but . . . go and have a look at the size of my name. I'll lend you a pair of field glasses.

"It's time the cinema industry realised that there is not only a fan appeal, that is box office. Star actors' names are not everything.

"Yes, put Clark Gable up in electric lights and the theatre will pack; but if it is a bad story the house will be empty at the end of the week.

"There is an intelligent public that picks library books by their authors, chooses its theatre by the playwright's name, and would go to the cinema on the scenarist's name provided the film is well done otherwise.

"Look how audiences to-day take notice of the directors' names; that's one sign of the box office appeal that is not confined to the fans.

"It's the lack of organisation over here that is the real trouble. British Producers with an eye to the future should be training scenario writers, picking the best, and importing the aces in that field from Hollywood to show them the ropes."

Mr. Horler shook his head at the pigeons.

"Do you think there is a public for thriller films?" I asked.

Thriller-writer Horler smiled.

"Melodrama always had, and always will have, a public," he said, "even among the highbrows, if only for relaxation; I know many Cabinet Ministers who read them, and go to see them, but they must be good."

"*Two's Company* had a very good Press," I said.

Sydney Horler beamed at the pigeons.

Denham Gets on with the Job

Korda's Wealth of Nations

By Marie Seton

SINCE LONDON FILM PRODUCTIONS built their new studio at Denham, that quiet unobtrusive little village presents a most peculiar sight to any passer-by. Come through the old-fashioned village street at lunch-time and more likely than not you find a crowd of extras in none too new evening clothes rushing into the once sleepy pub. Or on the other hand it may be a bevy of would-be Mr. Cochran lovelies disguised as gypsies for the Annabella picture *Wings of the Morning*. Every pub for miles around is now coining money through the invasion of Mr. Korda's 2,000 employees. Even the most modest dimity tea-room is finding that eggs, boiled, scrambled, poached or fried won't satisfy this temperamental horde; while the price of land has soared in the last three months.

The new studio, where the din of hammers is still so deafening that the opinions and counter opinions of half the crack technicians of Europe are lost to the visiting correspondent, sprawls magnificently over nearly a couple of hundred acres. Hundreds of offices, dressing-rooms like week-end flats, a dozen or so miles of passages have been quite beautifully decorated; the colour scheme, surprisingly restrained for this expensive Tower of Babel, is cream for the walls and red for the woodwork.

The move from Isleworth to Denham has upset most of Mr. Korda's old plans. Something like a couple of dozen of the stories he has bought from time to time have been sold to other companies. Only *Rembrandt* with Charles Laughton plods along; but shrouded in secrecy as Mr. Laughton will allow no journalistic sleuths on the set. The long delayed *Elizabeth* has been passed on to Erich Pommer, who has formed what amounts to his own company within London Films. Pommer is also preparing *Troop Ship*, of which Cameron Menzies is the director and the scenarists too numerous to mention.

The much-talked-of *Cyrano* will now be made by one of the tenant companies at Denham, New World Pictures. Another tenant is Capitol Films, at present shooting the master of innuendo, Tom Walls, in *Dishonour Bright*.

Robert T. Kane, the big noise of New World, seems to be as busy and as ambitious as Mr. Korda. He has signed up Annabella for several pictures, and Henry Fonda at the last moment as co-star for her first English speaking adventure, *Wings of the Morning*, which is the first story picture to be made in Europe in Technicolour. To quote the publicity sheet, *Wings of the Morning* has pronounced box-office angles for "it will put on the screen for the first time in natural colour that greatest of sporting events—the Derby." The unit had banked on a brown horse winning for the colour scheme, as brown like pale blue had come in for years; hence great consternation when it was grey!

"Thirty beautiful girls play the parts of gypsies in a colourful prologue dated 1890. For the same sequence fifteen gypsy caravans and a hundred real Romany gypsies have been used. Annabella appears in full gypsy costume with dark hair and flashing eyes." And later she becomes her own descendant in the fashion creations of 1936 designed by René Hubert. The director is Glen Tryon and the Technicolour staff includes Natalie Kalmus as colour director (meet Mrs. Kalmus in Meetings and Acquaintances), and Rey Rennahan, who has been photographing colour for fifteen years and filmed both *La Cucaracha* and *Becky Sharp*.

Conrad Veidt and Raymond Massey will play along with a so far nameless but nevertheless glittering star from Hollywood, in an adaptation of the seventeenth century historical romance *Under the Red Robe*. Mr. Massey seems busy on the *Time Machine*.

Under the Red Robe is the second lavish production in which Mr. Kane is setting out to "see that productions of New World Pictures will be worthy of distribution to cinemas throughout the world alongside of Twentieth Century-Fox's brilliant Hollywood line-up."

Meanwhile, Korda has decided not to make a colour picture of his own until the end of the year; and the telephone exchange at Denham is so busy that some people have to go to Uxbridge to make their calls.

TRADE LAGS BEHIND PUBLIC

Oscar Deutsch, controller of the Odeon Theatres, writes to *The Era* in regard to the public reaction to Norman Walker's *Turn of the Tide*, which has been booked extensively on the Odeon circuit :

"In all the better class situations, the public have thoroughly enjoyed it, and commented very favourably. In the Industrial Theatres they have liked it without any comment.

"I think the reason that this film has done well is due to the fact that it is rather out of the ordinary rut of entertainment, and is in a class which we classify as a homely picture, but, unfortunately, the advance trailer and the very poor publicity that the renters supplied have probably been responsible for it not being in the tip-top class, and also the fact that it did not have a West End presentation."

* * *

***Turn of the Tide* brought a breath of fresh air into the cinema, yet neither the producers, distributors, nor exhibitors, usually quick to seize upon novelty, had sufficient faith in the film. More films like *Turn of the Tide* will be made, and it is exhibitors with vision like Oscar Deutsch who will make money out of them.**

The Golden Voice

R. E. Jeffry has just celebrated his fifth year as commentator for Universal Talking News. This reel circulates mainly in the Provinces where the fans regard Jeffry as the ace of all commentators. He confesses to a considerable fan mail and invitations to open bazaars and suchlike are frequent.

He writes all his commentaries and as each issue averages eight items, and he has done six hundred issues, that means close on five thousand stories.

Jeffry's commentaries go all out for the laughs and generally get them. The material he works to is not always of the best, but this he can usually conceal with a neatly-turned phrase, that attracts attention away from the mute to the sound track. Up in Lancashire and Wales they think a lot of him.

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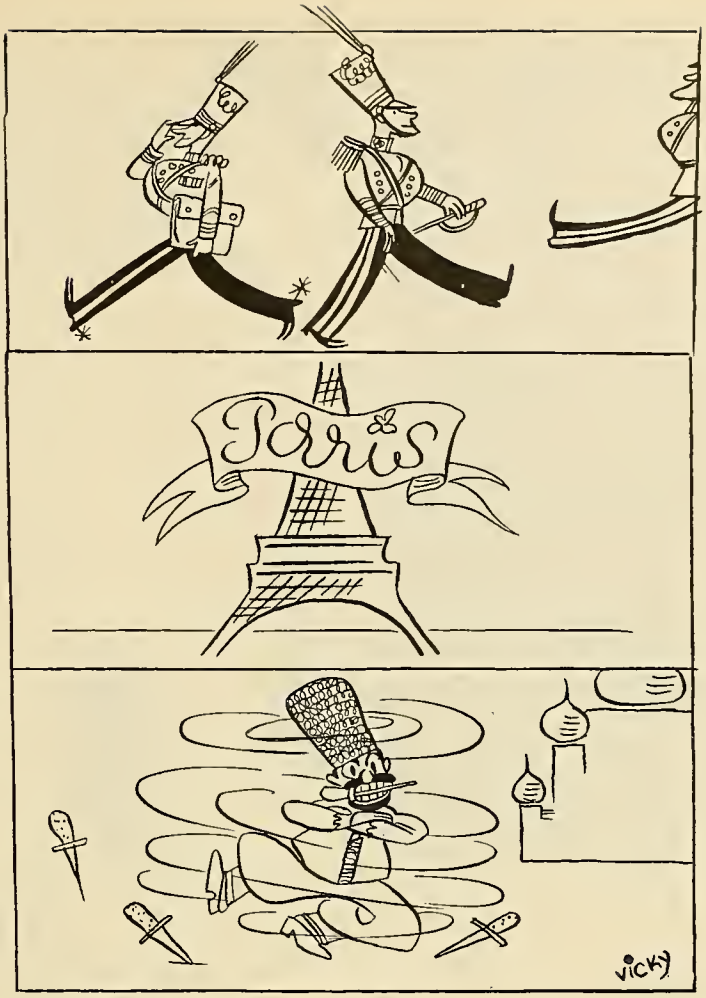
What films have taught me

BY
LESLIE WITHERS
(FILM CRITIC,
"SUNDAY
MERCURY,"
BIRMINGHAM)



"I have learned that Vienna is full of people in uniforms and steins."

"I know that Paris has a tower called Eiffel."

"I know that there is insanity in Russia."

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THINK FOR A moment about the last half dozen you have seen and decide honestly whether they have touched upon Reality; if the people in them did the things people you know would do; if those things would happen at all. Characters rarely rub their eyes, sneeze, sniff, or do all the little everyday actions—only in farce when the gestures are absurdly accentuated.

The trouble is that actors, actresses and directors have been schooled along extremely fictional lines. There are things definitely not done; others are just never thought of. Bits that reveal national characteristics are either exaggerated or entirely fallacious.

I've never been to America but that country's films have educated me to the following facts, amongst others:

That Atlantic City favours business conventions at which sales representatives forget graphs and think of legs, throw over bonds for blondes. I know that hick towns are hot-beds of frightful gossip, mainly about morals, and contain many old men with pointed beards and squeaky voices and prodigious spitting range; that even lesser class apartment houses have one kitchen per person, usually refrigerators, always a telephone; that taxis are like locusts and as much used by the public as hats; that the subways and the overhead railways are the method of transit of typists and the lesser business crowd and are frightfully hot in the summer.

I know that in times of trouble an American always says "Everything's goin' to be awlrite!"; that Chicago is a noble city (architecturally); that editors and general managers are known to and addressed by their staffs by their initials.

* * *

I've seen the Bronx, Wall Street, Broadway, Coney Island, 42nd Street, and Grand Central Station often enough to breed contempt.

I know that typists are beautiful, invariably well-dressed, unusually familiar with their employers (whether owned by them outside the office or not).

With courts, district attorneys, election methods, the police, newspaper offices and employees, college life and its 24 hours insistence upon proficiency at football—with all of these I am on more than speaking terms.

* * *

As for British films—well, from them I've learned that Vienna is gay and leafy and full of people in uniforms and steins; that London consists of Trafalgar Square at night, the Bank of England, advertisements disguised as buses, taxis that make Boadicea's chariot look like next year's Motor Show, with drivers who are always Cockney, and the Royal Garden Party.

That English young men dress ridiculously well and speak a stilted, rounded speech known, most unfairly, as "Oxford"; that English girls are like icebergs in muslin, sometimes smile wanly, and don't know what to do with their hands.

* * *

I know that Paris has a tower called Eiffel (because this shot always bears the flowery caption "Paris"); that there are Pyramids in Egypt, convicts in Devil's Island, sex obsession in the Tudor family, insanity in Russia, religious mania in Scotland, Persian cats in Turkey, and hundreds of innocent looking spies under the personal direction of a man called Hitchcock.

All petty criminals, I realise, say "Gorblimey!" and "Lumme, guv'nor!" and I have seen that railway trains are wheeled watertanks drawing felt-lined match-boxes; that inns are awfully "olde worlde" and full of rafters, beards and darts.

* * *

Also I fully understand that policemen are snail-like, think as fast and as much as stalagmites, and lugubriously suck pencil stubs; that butlers are self-effacing, ever-present monoliths; that sons of the peerage are half-witted, in debt, always in evening dress and yet marry the prettiest girl you ever saw.

That, in the main, is all I know of America and England after six years of being a film critic. My education along these lines is now not progressive, but repetitive.

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...TIME MARCHES ON

Hollywood defeats Pabst

DIRECTOR OF KAMERADSCHAFT RETURNS TO FRANCE

Two years ago G. W. Pabst crossed the Atlantic to make films in America. Europe held its breath and waited. Would he become the servant of Hollywood finance, like those of his colleagues who had made the crossing before him; or would the magic of his name and his renowned psychological insight win him his freedom in the States and make him a second Lubitsch?

The inevitable happened. Hollywood won. But unlike many of his distinguished predecessors Pabst determined that even if he could not swallow America, America should not swallow him. He has returned to Europe, and is negotiating a new film in Paris.

What will he do now? Pabst has shown that at his best he is among the greatest directors in movie history, and that even at his worst he retains a supreme technical skill. But technical skill is not enough. Will his next films, made with all the maturity of his long experience, be of the *Kameradschaft* calibre—or will he quietly fade out with a series of *Don Quixotes?*

His American experiences have made even the level-headed Pabst a disappointed man. He arrived to find himself and his work unknown to the Hollywood executives (they had never heard of the *Drei Groschen Oper*). He was rushed into production a month after his arrival in strange surroundings. He was offered—in fact overwhelmed with—expert assistance in every branch of film-making; but he had no knowledge of American methods and no time to learn them. Experts whom he would have used to good account under different circumstances merely became a barrier between himself and his film. In these conditions *A Modern Hero* was made. It appeared in England, passed practically unnoticed, and happily for its director, disappeared as quietly as it came.

There followed the preparation of a script for an anti-war film under Paramount. But the story was considered politically dangerous and the film was abandoned without entering production.

Renouncing Hollywood and all its works, Pabst turned his attention to New York. He had long been interested in reconciling the stubborn rigidity of opera to the fluent demands of movie. He now set to work on an experimental adaptation of *Faust*. But financial backing failed before the script was completed. Pabst pleaded incompatibility with America and returned to Europe. He is at present in Paris discussing a possible film with officials of the French industry.

Pabst came to the cinema from the hard and practical milieu of stage production. His stage experience had given him two assets which were to prove important in his new medium. It had taught him to handle the most intractable of actors and to reduce their personal inclinations to terms of his own intentions; and it had taught him the organisational as well as the æsthetic value of individual production control from start to finish. Inherent in his own mental make-up were an intense interest in psycho-analytic theory and a passion for exactitude.

Thus equipped he began his film career. Psychology he applied to his handling of actors; exactitude to his control of production. For Pabst believes wholeheartedly in the closest contact with his technicians. Beyond the normal conferences with art-directors, cameramen, recordists, cutters, he likes to discuss his needs with his carpenters, electricians, property men and floor staff. He maintains that close participation in the work of the subsidiary production departments is of the greatest importance since it gives the director precise and knowledgeable control over the necessary gives-and-takes of production. Veto an enthusiastic proposal, and you make an enemy; direct it in harmony with other demands, and you add to the film.

On the floor Pabst is as much concerned with his camera as with his actors. He believes that power of statement in films is largely the result of precision in camera set-up and emphasis. He compares the frame of the screen to the writer's word. One word may have many meanings, many emphases. So may one shot contained in the boundaries of the frame, and it is the director's business to select the right values through his viewfinder.

Leading Film Director Turns Left

Jean Renoir, son of the great painter, and one of the founders of the celebrated French *avant-garde* movement, made his reputation with the production of *Nana* when still a young man. This film put him in the front rank of French directors.

He has made two important sound films, *La Chienne* and *Toni*, neither of which has been shown in England.

In Paris Jean Renoir's new film is considered to be distinctly Red. No one in the commercial cinema has a good word for it, but it is to be seen in the cinemas of the working class districts of Paris. With the coming of the *Front Populaire* government in France and the establishment of the Maison de la Culture, *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* is being widely distributed through trades union organisations and other non-theatrical channels. The film is a very direct exposure of journalistic racketeering. It shows the exploitation of the employees of a newspaper, it shows the editor decamping with the staff's wages after seducing several young women, and the staff proceeding to run the paper on communal lines.

As soon as the paper is on its feet, the editor returns and assumes a dictatorial position. The hero, who was a ringleader of the collective work, shoots him when he is about to decamp a second time.

Le Crime de Monsieur Lange is not a great picture, it is possibly not much more than a competent picture, but it is certainly a relief from the tedious welter of French commercial films, which have nothing to say that is either fresh or amusing or in any way connected with life.

E. L.

France may Nationalise Film Industry

The landslide towards the Left, in the French elections, may have a decisive influence on the destiny of the French film industry.

It is well known that one of the most important aims of the Socialist Party is the nationalisation of industry. In the Socialist programme, such organisations as the Bank of France, public and private banks, insurance companies, industrial concerns, railways, would be managed by the State under the direct control of the Government. So, too, with the film business.

Interviewed a few weeks ago by the weekly fan magazine *Cinemonde*, Paul Faure, general secretary of the Socialist Party, said they wanted to make a national institution of the cinema industry. "If our party holds in its hands the whole political power, it will make the cinema industry a national institution, because it is impossible for a Government which wants to introduce a new policy to leave a medium of propaganda as strong as the cinema in the hands of groups whose interests may be contrary to those of the Government.

"I have the real feeling that a Socialist State would easily create a much better cinema industry than this one of the present capitalist regime.

"We would not use the cinema especially for propaganda pictures. Sometimes we would make pictures illustrating social ideals. I do not think that propaganda is everything in the cinema. The first condition is to make artistic and fine pictures which are entertainment. If the artistic quality of the films is improved, the minds of the patrons will be improved too.

"Newsreels should show real things, and be loyal and honest. There should be propaganda in the newsreels for such ideals as peace and social equality.

"We would welcome foreign pictures. They bring to our screens an original note. They help us to know the soul of other nations. It would be stupid to ban them. But it would be stupid, too, to open our borders unreservedly to foreign productions.

"It is generally agreed that State monopolies, especially in France, have had bad results. Some may be afraid that the Socialist State would make bad pictures.

"State enterprises may have defects, but it is easy to control them, to improve them.

"If the motion picture industry comes into the hands of official organisations where producers and patrons are represented together instead of being managed by irresponsible State employees, as under the present monopolies, it is certain we shall go forward."

Director of "Dood Wasser" makes commercial film

Rutten is a film director who owes his name (let us not speak of fame) to a row, which was kicked up by annoyed spectators on the Biennale of Venice in August, 1934. His film *Dood Wasser* was incomprehensible for a public that could not understand a word of Dutch. As a film *Dood Wasser* was remarkable enough. Not, however, on account of the personality of the director but exclusively on account of the fotografy. For Holland this film had its interest. Not only because the theme was special Dutch (the diking in of the Zuiderzee) but because this picture was a first attempt to produce something serious.

And although neither the Dutch public nor the critics spoke so very much in favourite of *Dood Wasser* film societies in abroad were deeply interested in Rutten's work. Indeed, as a documentary there were many things to be praised in this picture. As for the directorship of Rutten we were not convinced yet of his artistic capacities, and we wanted to wait the results of a production,

W.F.N.'s Dutch correspondent tells the story of Rutten, the director, in his own inimitable English.

which could give better possibilities to judge Rutten's talents. Then Rutten was sent to the Dutch East Indies in order to make the outdoor shots for the film *Rubber*, a transcription of a well-known novel of Mrs. Szekely-Lulofs.

In these times, now political passions stir up people to protest against each film (the performances of *Kermesse Heroique* were made impossible all over Holland on account of a kind of fascistic terror) it was necessary to make drastic changes in the subject. Mrs. Szekely who had offered a rather astringent opinion of life in the Dutch East Indies—we leave aside in how far this point of view is wrong or wright—had to alter essential parts of her novel, which was certainly not a change for the good.

The film *Rubber* got ready one of these days. And although the opening night won't take place before the first week of September next the Tobis enabled us to come and see the picture.

And indeed we are sorry to say that we cannot be so very enthusiastic about it.

As for the story we regret that each tendency has been cut conscientiously. What remains now is not more than a love-story somewhere in the tropics. And as the author of the scenario did not have very much routine, this story has been told without the tension it needs. The only problem that is posed in this film is the position of a planter's wife, left alone in a dreadful jungle when her husband is working somewhere else: how she comes to begin a flirtation, with all the traditional consequences of it. We have seen all that before and better. Technically this picture has been produced intelligently. The acting is also sufficient. As for Rutten, we are convinced now that he is no director of importance. In *Rubber* each detail has been neglected accurately. The working of climax and anti-climax seems forgotten. In scenes which must cause dramatic effects no use is made of not even one single close-up. There is an absolut lack of shape in this picture. And in comparison to *Young Hearts*, *Rubber* has not succeeded in giving us the slightest emotion.

Rutten has however new plans. After the Colonial Departement and the Government of the Dutch East Indies refused the production in Atjeh or elsewhere of a picture entitled *In Days of Fight* he intends to make a picture on the isle of Java of which the theme tells of the strained relations between natives and Europeans and the rapprochement which follows when the Europeans help the native population against their mutual enemy: the volcano.

Before this film Rutten announced to produce in July next a screen version of an old theatreplay, *The Secret of Macropoulos*. The leading role is given to Mrs. Else Mauhs, famous Dutch actress.

R. H. J. KIEK.

Renoir Heads Socialist Film League

(From W.F.N. Paris correspondent)

An important new movement is being founded in France called *Ciné Liberté*. At its head is Jean Renoir, famous French film director, who recently made *La Vie est a Nous* for the Communist Party.

Ciné Liberté is organising a vast network of non-theatrical showings throughout France, available to all members for a small subscription. Worthwhile films, or films banned by the censor, will be shown.

One of the main objects of *Ciné Liberté* is to organise public feeling to such an extent that the censorship will have to be abolished.

The central office has four main committees, dealing with technical matters, programmes, audiences, and Press.

* * *

WALTER RUTTMAN'S NEW FILM

Walter Ruttman, best known for his early documentary film, *Berlin*, has found his latest location on the shores of the Baltic. Here he has filmed the work of the lifeboatmen, whose risks and sacrifices on the North Sea and the Baltic have provided him with a theme round which he has built a drama of highly-coloured incidents.

W.F.N. has received a communication from Berlin couched in terms of the best Aryan bombast, but we feel that in the hands of Ruttman the incidents will tell their own story of heroism, without any attempt to play up Nazi sentiments. The film follows closely the actual procedure of normal salvage operations. The signal of distress is received, and quickly the lifeboat is launched. The breeches buoy is tried in vain, and the lifeboat is forced to approach perilously near the sinking ship. The climax is reached when a small, inflated rubber boat is sent out to bring the crew one by one back to safety.

Such a theme will undoubtedly give Ruttman every opportunity to build up an actuality drama of the first order.

Member of "Les Six" to Broadcast here

On July 10th François Poulenc, French composer, will broadcast a recital of his own piano music. Walter Leigh here estimates Poulenc's contribution to modern music.

"François Poulenc, born in 1899, belongs to the bright young generation of composers of whom much less is heard nowadays than their quickly earned fame just after the War seemed to promise. Gramophone enthusiasts know his Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano, a slender, attractive work; and his 'Aubade' has recently been used for a ballet. But there can be few composers whose names have become well-known upon so little tangible evidence. Elegance, grace, Parisian wit and charm are characteristics of all his work; also superficiality and a lack of artistic conscience, leading him often into banality. For so gifted a musician it seems that he is too easy-going to make the necessary efforts towards greatness which some of his contemporaries, notably Milhaud, have made.

"In the highly-coloured 'Post-War' years when the Group Movement was fashionable in the arts, six French composers, Milhaud, Honegger, Auric, Poulenc, Durey, and Germaine Taillefure formed a group appropriately called 'Les Six.' Although the organisation was soon dissolved the publicity-value attached to its title has ever since been considerable. Even now it is mainly as a sometime member of the 'Six' that Poulenc's name is known to the public. He has, indeed, only one major work to his credit, the delightful ballet 'Les Biches,' forever memorable for the tune:

'Say, what is Love?
Have you seen him, MacGregor?'

for the dancing of Nemtchinova, and for the enormous sofa."

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Sergei Mikhailovitch Eisenstein

U.S.S.R. goes Hollywood

Within the last three years there has been little or no information about Russian films. To clear the mystery "W.F.N." took the opportunity afforded by H. V. Meyerowitz's visit to obtain authentic news

by H. V. MEYEROWITZ

Without the help of S. M. Eisenstein I doubt whether I would have had the opportunity to see a single film, or interview anybody of importance during my stay in the U.S.S.R. I spent a whole week trying to get people on the telephone in Leningrad, and then wrote letters to Eisenstein and Pudovkin in Moscow, telling them that I was interested in film and particularly documentary film, and begging them to arrange things for me.

Eisenstein startled me by actually replying to my letter, calling on me as soon as I arrived in Moscow, and from that moment on everything was simple. He explained to me later on, that it was due to an African address on my letter-head that he paid so much attention to me, because he was intensely interested in Africa and was hoping to make a film there in the future. He pounced upon my African photographs and took away with him as many as he could get, and also a little Joruba mask carved in wood which I had been unwise to put on my writing desk. How lucky I was I only realised when I was told afterwards that a luckless reporter, who had been film critic on one of the largest London papers, had been ringing him regularly every morning for about five days. He always got Eisenstein on the telephone and was then calmly informed that Mr. Eisenstein had just left for the factory.

I asked him about the tragedy of his film in Mexico, and he remarked bitterly that his book with photographs would appear shortly. He was still busy with cutting the finished portions of "Biejen Meadow." This film deals with co-operative farming and is typical of the recent development of cinematography in the U.S.S.R., in that it has a personal hero in the figure of Peter Morozov, a young Pioneer, who had given his sabotaging father away to the authorities, and was in turn shot by him. This is an historical fact, and Morozov is the hero of all the young Pioneer organisations in the country.

Knowing the organisation in the U.S.S.R., I was extremely surprised when at the appointed time a motor car appeared to take me to Mosfilm, where Eisenstein had arranged the showing of two outstanding films of recent U.S.S.R. production. The first one seen was "Aerograd."

"AEROGRAD"

Author-Director: A. P. Dovjenko
Camera: E. Tissé, M. Gindin

I presume that this film was originally written as a film with a strong political message—namely, drawing attention to the danger of an invasion from the Far East, and the building of a city, Aerograd, an air base to protect the eastern boundaries from Japanese insurrection. In order to develop this theme a most cumbersome and complicated appoach was chosen. A small group of Staroveri, a religious sect, living on the shores of the Amur where it flows into the Tartar Strait, had entered into negotiations with Japanese to help them to destroy a collective farm in the neighbouring district. The Japanese Samurai and two of his followers arrived armed with dynamite to blow up the Collective Farm. The attempt is frustrated through the vigilance of the collective farm's sentry, Chudiakov, who chases the intruders through the forest, shooting two of them and cornering the Samurai in a hut. The owner of the hut, the Starover, Glushak, comes out and reveals himself to be an old childhood pal of the collective farmer. He swears that nobody entered his hut, and the collective farmer believes him reluctantly and goes. The Samurai tries to incite the Staroveri community to an attack on the collective farms, which is frustrated through a Chuchk, and an airman who suddenly appears on the scene and shoots the Samurai.

The apotheosis was supposed to be the arrival of the Air Fleet, the dropping of parachutists, who then form into a military detachment and march off to lay the foundations of the new city of Aerograd.

Typical of the Dovjenko method, the whole political issue becomes of minor importance, not to say a disturbing element, in the whole epic rendering of the beautiful Far Eastern Siberian landscape, its forests, its rivers and its inhabitants. The main theme of the film is shifted from the political issue to the words of Chudiakov, the collective farmer partisan, and these words become the *leit-motif*. He says these words to his friend Glushak, when he suspects him of sheltering an enemy for the first time. He points to the landscape around him with a simple and touching movement of the head, and says in the same rhythm and very simply: "Is there anywhere in the world such beauty again?" meaning of course that this beauty should be protected from the onslaught of foreign and destructive elements. He says it again when the collective farmers attack the Staroveri by surprise and his friend falls into his hands. He prevents his comrades from killing him, pointing out that this was his case and that he was going to empty the cup to the dregs. He walks into the forest, his friend following him and tottering with tiredness. For a long time the camera follows this gruesome march through the forest until Glushak, who cannot walk any more, calls to Chudiakov who is so deep in thought that he seems to have forgotten everything. Chudiakov stops, and looking at the landscape around him remarks again reproachfully: "Is there anywhere in the world such beauty again?" This is the outstanding and emotionally strongest moment of the film. He loves his friend and at the same time has to destroy him for the sake of preserving all this beauty for the cause of the new State. He points his rifle at him, takes aim, and says: "You trees and mountains and rivers, be witnesses of my grief. I am shooting Glushak, sixty-two years of age, and a friend of mine since my childhood days." Glushak throws his hands up in the air and breaks out into an insane howling laughter. The scene ends there.

Dovjenko has created an epic of the grandeur of the Siberian country. He has managed to bring sound and moving pictures together, the wind, the cracking of branches under the feet of panting and breathless fugitives, the terrors of the dark-

H. V. Meyerowitz, a sculptor from South Africa and a student of the arts and crafts of backward nations, has recently returned to England from a tour of the studios in the U.S.S.R. He has been able to interview the leading personalities in the film industry there and has come to the conclusion that the documentary film movement in Russia has been seriously handicapped by the official "Arts" policy. He considers that a form of play-picture is being encouraged which repeats "all the mistakes of an artistically obsolete Western film industry." He has put his information, photographs and those stills supplied by Soviet film directors at the disposal of "World Film News."

ness of the forest, the beauties of unending mountain ranges rushing towards a camera suspended in an aeroplane. He has been fortunate to have two splendid actors who adapted their style and speech to the rhythm of the film and made the story of the tragic ending of a childhood friendship the crowning episode of the film. It is absurd, however, that a little Staroveri community should be the cause of calling up all this tremendous fuss and machinery. It is painful to hear and see people shrieking in a perfectly uncontrolled way, like bad actors on the stage, as the agitators of the Staroveri community, breaking up the rhythm of the film and destroying it.

Eisenstein, interviewed, remarked: "All that we have been trying to do in the beginning—namely, the elimination of theatrical actors—is coming back again. The building up of the film on the pretext of the danger of the Staroveri community is rather ridiculous."

Pudovkin, interviewed, said that Dovjenko was an outstanding figure among Russian cinema directors, that he was a Ukrainian and heavy, and inclined to give his films a slow, epic and romantic development, that when he read the script to an audience they had all been impressed by the perfect rhythm because he had read the words of the actors in the tone and with the expression that he wanted them pronounced. It was a disappointment to all of them when they saw the film, and he agreed with me that most of the actors had not been able to adapt themselves to the style.

It is a pity that here again, as in many cases of an artistic production in the U.S.S.R., a great artist had attempted to find a form for the political demands of the time and not succeeded.

The film was not well received by the public. It was too complicated for the simple man and too many problems, simultaneously dealt with, confused the issue. So far as the Socialistic realism goes, the Socialistic tendency was forced into the background and Dovjenko's best friends cannot call the film realistic—a film that at its best is a fantastic and tragic ballad.

"WE OF KRONSTAD"

Director: Vinievski

"We of Kronstad" is the first film by the young director, Vinievski. It was interesting to compare it with "Aerograd." It deals with the historical incident of the time of the civil wars when a small detachment of sailor volunteers from Kronstad was completely destroyed by the forces of General Judenich, advancing on Petrograd. Vinievski's problem was a much easier one than Dovjenko's. It is an historical film and no political or social question of future importance is at stake. He has made a straightforward and historical incident of it. Conforming to the desire for Folk's heroes, he has definitely put three actors in the leading roles: the Commissar in charge of the detachment, the rough and objectionable sailor who in the end becomes the only survivor and the saviour of the whole situation, and the wife of the Commander of the Red Forces.

The Commissar is sent from Petrograd to call for volunteers. He arrives in Kronstad at night, and, having explained the situation to the sailors, gets them to vote on each one who is chosen for the expedition. He persuades them to choose among themselves also one who does not belong to the party and who has shown himself a black character by grumbling over lack of food and knocking down a comrade who remonstrated with him for getting too familiar with a lady. The detachment lands and is destroyed after a gallant battle, and the survivors with stones around their necks are thrown from a rock into the sea. They all die with the exception of

(*Continued on page* 14)

Mosfilm Studios, Moscow

"We of Kronstad" (Lenfilm)

"Circus" (Mosfilm)

"Circus" (Mosfilm)

"Aerograd" (Mosfilm)

"We of Kronstad" (Lenfilm)

the hero, who manages not only to cut his bonds but also to dive and reclaim the corpse of the Commissar. He buries him under a stone mound and, helped by the wife of the Commander, escapes in women's clothes to Kronstad, to rally the remainder of the fleet to the assistance. The Red Forces are meanwhile being gradually overwhelmed by the attacks of Judenich's troops, but the sailors, fired to enthusiasm by the arriving hero and infuriated by his account of the atrocious killing of the surviving Communists and the Commissar, rush to the scene, land, and arrive at the psychological moment, in time to destroy the White Army, chasing the resisting ones and their Commander over the same rock into the sea, where their comrades had found their end.

The film has obviously been inspired by the Vassiliev brothers' "Chapæv." It has not the quality and tact in the drawing of the figures; they seemed more crudely characterised. The attempts at rough humour smack a bit of slap-stick, but the atmosphere of the time is splendidly rendered, and the effect of the film is very strong. Sound is used with great skill—promenading and whistling sailors in the night, strumming a balalaika, followed by the camera; the terrified children under the care of the Commander's wife, with the thundering of horses' hoofs of the White Cossack Regiments galloping by. The psychological arrival of the sailors is all very plausible and impressive. Feats like falling with a heavy stone round the neck down a cliff and coming up again unscathed, remind one of American "serials" with the miraculous escapes of actors who had previously been blown up with dynamite or shot from the ends of cannons.

The film was very well received in the U.S.S.R. It is simple and everybody can understand it. It has no complicated problems and Vinievski has, with this piece of work, come very much to the fore as a film director. It is certainly not realistic throughout but theatrical and false in the acting of many "comic" episodes. The convention of the theatre is obvious and painful to behold at frequent intervals.

These were the two main films shown to me by Eisenstein as representing the new work in the U.S.S.R. I could not persuade him to show me any rushes of his new film, but he kindly managed to arrange for me to see the pre-view of the film "Circus" directed by Alexandrov.

Social Problems Grafted On

The U.S.S.R. public had been looking forward with great expectations to the film "CIRCUS" because Alexandrov, the director, had previously been very successful with his film called "Happy Kids." The film was starring the actress L. P. Orlova, of whom Pudovkin remarked, moving the palms of his hands up and down, that she had already learned the necessary eyelid flutter from her Hollywood colleagues. This film belongs to the series of Americanised productions with social problems rather incongruously grafted on. It is not taken seriously by the important film directors in the U.S.S.R. but probably fits well into Boris Shumiatski's (Film chief of all production) idea for fostering the studio film industry.

A girl is stoned out of an American village. She falls exhausted into a railway compartment with a bundle, and much to the surprise of a beautiful but villainous-looking man who is the only other occupant. That is the prologue.

The scene opens in Moscow in the Circus, where she is being shot from a cannon, managed by the same man, among the thundering applause of the audience. She takes the opportunity of singing and dancing a rather unsuccessful imitation of the usual Hollywood step-dance and croon. Her efforts are technically so appalling that I doubt whether any Hollywood producer would give her a showing, not to speak of a job.

The "social problem" is revealed when one sees that the contents of the bundle was a black child, of which she is ashamed, and her Impresario tries to blackmail her into loving him by threatening to expose this fact. A beautiful young artiste, who has been engaged by the Circus, falls in love with her, jealously watched by the Impresario. The Impresario is a German, and in order to accentuate his weak and empty character he wears a rubber pad shoulders and chest which is inflated with a bicycle pump for every performance. He is terribly "unsympathetic." The Director of the Circus wants to get rid of this couple, and the young inventor who wants to marry his plain-looking daughter, constructs a cannon, an improvement on the German one, with a view to replacing the previous number as soon as the contract ends. The heroine Orlova writes a letter to her lover, asking him to come to a rendezvous. The letter is stolen by the Impresario who threatens to expose her. The heroine disguises the director's daughter in her own clothes, but the Impresario notices the subterfuge and comes rushing back to the Circus at the moment when the great Cannon Act is about to take place. He produces the black baby to the public, and is squashed, kindly but firmly, by the militia men who explain to him that in the U.S.S.R. every woman has the right to get babies, be they black, brown, yellow or even blue and green, if she likes to.

An attempt at a Hollywood revue, with very skilful photography at times, particularly in the Circus scenes, seems comic for the onlooker from Western Europe because it is so pathetic in its attempt to copy Hollywood productions. "The constructor," who is supposed to be a comedian, acts in precisely the same way as amateur actors who want to be funny, but only succeeds in boring his audience.

In order to justify this attempt at lighter film "menu" the social problem is introduced and the way it is done is crude and platitudinous in the extreme.

Esther Schub was sitting in front of me. I went to her after the performance, which took place in the Dom Kino (Cinema House) in Moscow, and I looked at her and said: "Well," and she looked at me with a very sad face and said, "Well," and that was the general feeling of the serious spectators.

I am certain that this film is going to be a success, that the theme song "Lullaby" will be sung by everybody in Moscow and perhaps in the U.S.S.R., but to me it was depressing to see this misbegotten attempt at a Paramount Parade produced in a country which was leading the world to a new era in cinema.

"PARTY TICKET"

Director: Pirieff

When I told Eisenstein and Pudovkin that I had seen "Party Ticket" directed by Pirieff, I saw a look of uneasiness coming into their faces. Of all the unfortunate film concoctions that I have ever seen pretending to deal with social problems, this was about the worst. All the worst elements of western film technique had been rallied to the aid of this film. How an audience could sit through what seemed to me at least 20 reels is beyond my understanding.

It was a story of three workers in a factory which existed for no particular reason, inasmuch as one never could see what it was really producing. The one is the good boy who loves his girl colleague. He confesses his love during an outing on a boat in Moscow. In order to arrange this the director coincides the boating love affair very successfully with the 1st of May and illuminates the resulting scenes with fireworks and music. The bad man of the film, who bears all the marks of unbearded villainy, visits a hut in the dark. There he finds a woman who has not even the time to present him with a salt herring when he has already been ejected through the door by a man who is obviously very furious. Some time afterwards the woman manages to escape and hand him the herring which he gnaws ravenously, leaning against a tree. In this situation he is found later on in the night by the young lover who gives him shelter and finds him work in the factory. The hero proposes to the girl who refuses him, because she apparently has been listening to the other one playing the guitar and singing melancholy songs at all possible and impossible moments.

The villain swindles his way into the Communist Party and is later on found out to be the son of a Kulak. He pinches the Party Ticket from the girl shock brigadier, whom he meanwhile has married, tries to commit suicide by fusing the factory, and becomes a hero because it is presumed that he has saved it, and the lover goes in disgust to some far province. He comes back, unmasks the villain, who suitably cringes and is led away by the police.

If one were to show to an unprejudiced audience the scene of the marriage of the villain and the shock brigadier, I am convinced that everybody would say that this was one of the Paramount revivals of films from 1912. The audience around me wept in agony when the Party Ticket was stolen, and the girl was expelled from the Party with the vote of her villainous husband.

I tackled Pudovkin about this film. He said: "Yes, it is a young director and very inexperienced and he has no taste, but I myself must admit that I clutched my breast-pocket from time to time to see whether my Party Ticket was still there."

I saw other films of this type in the U.S.S.R., less pretentious in the get-up but equally absurd and dilettante in their technique. The people I really felt sorry for were the camera men and the technicians who had managed to put up a splendid show. The sound was good, the photography was excellent in many cases, but the actors let loose, with an important director and wild scenario, were hard to bear.

I have the feeling it would have done Shumiatski much more good to come to England and become acquainted with modern documentary film productions instead of going to America and being impressed by monster productions of the play-film type.

Esther Schub and Michael Kaufman (documentary film directors) appeared depressed during an interview, both having been branded as formalists and accused of empty technical trickery without the necessary socialistic content in their productions. They gave me occasion to listen to a long story of how documentary film had been invaded and ruined by incompetent people because they thought it to be the coming fashion, and how they and Dziga-Vertov had been the pioneers of documentary film in the U.S.S.R. and had been branded with the stamp of formalism, together with all the others. "It is quite good that outsiders come from time to time to the U.S.S.R.," said Kaufman, "because they may help to clarify the minds of those who are trying unsuccessfully to impose theories on artists and their productions."

New season's production. Sylvia Sydney in Fritz Lang's first American production (see page 23)

Hollywood promises 856 pictures for 1936

NEW PROGRAMME WILL SHOW MORE COLOUR, MORE MUSICAL WESTERNS

American film production begins a new year this month. Sixty-four companies promise 856 feature films for the 1936–37 season. The new year is marked by the expansion of the independent companies. More than twenty new production companies of potential consequence have made their announcements.

A study of the 1936–37 programmes discloses an increased use of colour, but used only where it will do the most good, unlike the promiscuous colour film production of 1930 which had such disastrous effects. It has taken colour six years to make a substantial come-back, and apparently the technical and commercial sponsors are suggesting the use of discretion. At least two dozen films will be made in colour this year.

Stereoscopic films will be made by Paramount for commercial release. They announce a series of six short films, entitled *Classics*, to be made both in technicolour and third dimension.

The use of music will be even further extended, taking a new expression as a background for Westerns. The schedules also show a substantial number of musical features, based more on old musical successes than on stock backstage themes.

There will be no decrease in short production, the trend being rather to an increase.

From the results of a poll among 80,000,000 cinemagoers in America, now being conducted by Warner Brothers to determine the fate of double feature programmes, will come a decision on the demand for shorts.

Cartoons will be even more stressed and Hollywood concedes an expansion in the production of Westerns.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, inspired by the reception of *Sequoia*, will make a series of short films based on wild animal life; Metro also plans extensive British production. Ben Goetz will be in charge of production and four films have already been scheduled: *Silas Marner*, *Wind and the Rain*, *The Yank at Oxford* and *Rage in Heaven*.

U.S.A. TWITS SOVIET

"The Soviet drama is now passing through a new phase—a phase of yet more pointed ideological and essential militant sharpness—logical, natural and rich in fertilising possibilities for the cinema," declares Sergei Eisenstein, as reported by *Motion Picture Herald*.

"Over here the best bets are Mickey Mouse and Shirley Temple. They'll fertilise any American box office."

Does the Public want longer programmes?

Warner Brothers Pictures is making a nation-wide survey of America to determine what cinemagoers prefer in their programmes. The current tendency in film production is towards longer pictures which will preclude the running of two story films in each programme. Warners want to find out whether films like *Anthony Adverse*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, running a hundred or more minutes, supported by newsreel and shorts, make the best type of programme.

The eighty million American cinemagoers are being questioned on this problem. It has been one of the most perplexing trade questions of the last twenty-five years.

If the American public decides against the two-feature programme, longer feature films will be an immediate result, thus enabling the large companies to proceed with the filming of the classics which require lengthier footage than the average dramatic picture.

The survey will not be for the purpose of approving or disapproving double feature programmes, but an impartial attempt to learn the mind of the public. Every interested person will be invited to present an opinion. Film critics of 2,000 daily newspapers will be asked to report the attitude of their readers and to invite frank expressions from them. Representatives of high school and collegiate papers will also be questioned. The co-operation of members of approximately 1,000 social and civic organisations will be sought.

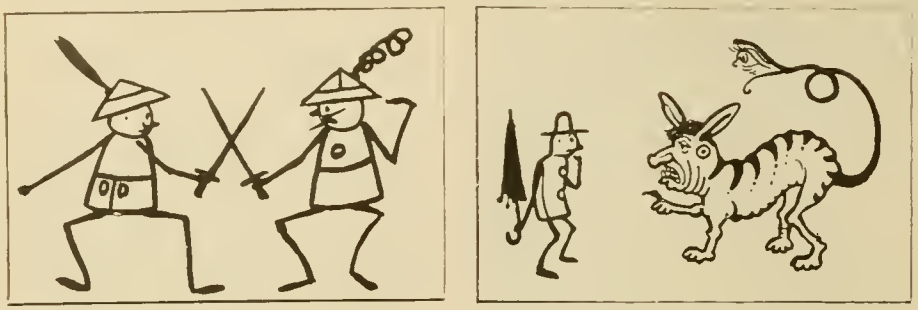
"Film producers are severely handicapped because of their lack of knowledge as to whether they must limit their films to an absolute maximum length, suitable for double feature programmes," the Warner management is reported to have said.

"Significant, perhaps, is the fact that the running time of the ten best films in 1935 averaged 106.1 minutes," Warners pointed out, adding: "By contrast, the running time of 545 films averaged 72.5 minutes. Thus the 'ten best' pictures proved more than 46 per cent longer than the average film. Whether this reflects a strong public approval of longer pictures is not certain."

An American film critic on the radio has been conducting his own inquiry. The opinions of listeners which have already been obtained favour the single feature programme along with variety or shorts.

The problem in Britain has been greatly aggravated by the current practice in certain cinemas of cutting the long pictures in order to fit two story films into one programme. One cinema operator, writing to the trade press, complained that the theatre owner often made him cut out as much as two reels (twenty minutes running time). Provincial cinemagoers should watch this practice and report cases, as it is illegal and against the interest of the public. It allows the exhibitor to be the final arbiter on the form of a film.

COLOUR AND CARTOON



Early Cartoons of Emil Cohl

Emil Cohl, inventor of film cartoons is on the dole

BY ANDRÉ BOUXIN

It is probable that nobody would have thought of the inventor of the cartoon if Walt Disney, the creator of Mickey, had not recently insisted on acknowledging the debt.

When the French Consul in Los Angeles gave him the Legion d'Honneur, Disney expressed his gratitude to the Frenchman who discovered one of the surest means of bringing poetry within the reach of the man in the street.

It was at a time when Georges Melies went off in the screen aerobus to conquer the North Pole between garlands of painted stars. Following the example of the old stage producer, Robert Houdin, the screen writers were living in an atmosphere of fairy-tales and poetry.

Armed with their magic wand, these delicious poets rendered beds lighter than air, transformed groups of petrified ladies into fountains of light and made Truth emerge from her well, a lamp in her hand.

When he discovered, in 1907, that his designs were sometimes used by other people for their films, Emil Cohl offered scenarios to Leon Gaumont who regularly paid him 25 francs for them. The cartoonist then composed what used to be called trick-films—like those living "Fruits and Vegetables" in which the potato put on a dress to go out and the tomato, shedding copious tears, shared the misfortunes of the artichoke. The poetic genius of Grandville, the wizard who was never tired of recreating the universe, and who made everything talk and walk, even before the cinema was invented, at that time influenced the phantasmagorias and metamorphoses which succeeded each other on the screen.

It was certainly the children's paradise, that other world where the giant of the snows swallowed the explorers one day of aurora borealis, and where the Baron de Munchausen unhooked the moon, polished it anew and finally replaced it in the scenery.

And so Emil Cohl's first animated cartoons were deliberately reminiscent of children's scribbles, and his first figures, two generals fighting a duel, had heads shaped like bits of indiarubber and little paper hats.

What has happened to those hundred-metre reels whose six thousand drawings Emil Cohl composed one by one? Who remembers, nowadays, "Phantasmagoria", "Nightmare in the Land of the Fantoches", where the features stood out white on the black background.

Alas, we shall never again see our old friend, "Agenor Maltrace", who could never find his arms and legs, nor the Adventures of Baron de Crack, who flew away with the wild ducks and steered himself with his coat-tails.

With the exception of Alexandre Alexieff, to whom we owe "Une Nuit sur le Mont Chauve" and the "Belle au Bois Dormant", there is nobody in France now equipped, like Emil Cohl, with those fairy spectacles which enabled him to reproduce so brilliantly the wealth of his imagination.

In 1912, Emil Cohl went to the United States and established a branch of "Il 'Eclair" at Fort Lee, New Jersey, where he animated the drawings of George MacManus and, in "Vent", hit upon the idea of using paper cut-outs to economise hundreds of drawings. In 1914, Emil Cohl returned to Europe. He reappeared in 1918 collaborating with Benjamin Rabier, and later directed the illustrious "Pieds nikelçs." Nevertheless, his name has gradually been forgotten. Now 80 years old, he is doomed to a life of poverty, and it is only a meagre unemployment allowance which keeps him from begging to remain alive.

In 1936, Emil Cohl, inventor of the animated cartoon, is on the dole.

As Beaudelaire wrote, *Je demande a tout homme qui pense, de me dire ce qui subsiste de la vie.*

THREE-MINUTE FILMS BRING KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT TEARS

Evidently the old saying, "Good things are done up in little packages", is the motto of Monsieur Marcel de Hubsch, the head of Atlantic Films in Paris: for though the pictures produced by his company, the Three-Minute Films, last but an elastic three minutes, they contain the amount of information which a diligent reader might glean from the British Museum in three months.

Monsieur de Hubsch calls them "the vulgarisation of important questions"; actually they are an effort to unravel, if not to solve, the weighty affairs which cause politicians, historians, astronomers and the cinema laity so much perplexity.

It might be said by the academic that three minutes' knowledge is a dangerous thing; but since the company worked for ten years before making the first small film of a large subject in 1931, they have probably sifted an enormous amount of material. Since 1931, Atlantic Films have completed twenty-two films, of which there

From "Arabia and Islam"

are versions in every known language of importance, including Japanese. Two films, one on the automatic telephone and the other of blood transfusion, are in the course of production; while seven more are to be produced in the near future.

The subjects chosen are widely different and an endeavour is made to maintain an impartial point of view. *The Chinese-Japanese Question, War Debts, A Voyage to the Moon, The Solar System, Arabia and Islam, Will you be a (road) Assassin?* and *The Parachute* are a few of the subjects. Each film is made under the supervision of experts who work on paper, and their work is then adapted to the cinema at the minimum cost of £1,250 per picture.

The most remarkable thing about these pictures of potted knowledge, is that though the chief method employed is the animation of diagrams, they never become monotonous or obtuse. On the contrary, Etienne Lallier, the artistic supervisor, sees that the diagrams dance in a manner as entertaining to the eye as the designs of Len Lye. When there is commentary it is so sparse and clear that it instructs with far more pleasure than pain.

M. S

From "Night on the Bare Mountain."

Secrets of Trick Films Disclosed

"Our method is the reverse of cartoon pictures. We do not need many drawings, but a single picture which we constantly transform."

So said Alexeiff, the Russian artist and his American assistant, Clare Parker, when interviewed in Paris by "W.F.N." It is two years since they completed their first picture, "Night on the Bare Mountain," which they made independently in their Paris studio. Previously they were engravers.

Alexeiff's most interesting illustrative work, which he considers to be interpretations rather than illustrations of his subject, is a French edition of Poe's "Fall of the House of Usher," and Gogol's "Diary of a Madman" published in London by the Cresset Press in 1929. Already in these engravings the mysterious and fantastic style characteristic of the film is evident.

"I wished," said Alexeiff, "to find a means in cinema of escaping from the flat tones and black lines of cartoon, and to reproduce a greater variety of shades, depth of tone and perspective."

To achieve this idea, he and Miss Parker invented a most ingenious device—a screen three by four feet and a centimetre thick, which at first sight looks like black velvet on which a picture has been traced. In reality it is a steel plate perforated with half a million holes into which Mr. Alexeiff and Miss Parker have stuck the same number of headless pins. (It took them six months.)

A light at each corner of the screen, and placed at an angle of 60 degrees from the surface, causes each pin to cast four shadows. From these shadows a series of pictures are formed. When the pins are pulled out to their maximum, the re-crossing of the shadows produces a dense black; if a group are pushed half way in the tints gradually become lighter: when pushed in flush with the screen patches of white appear. Thus by merely touching the needles with a small metal roller it is possible to change the expressions, movements and form of the figures and produce a picture with as infinite variety of tones as an engraving.

The remarkable melting effects in "Night on the Bare Mountain" that caused much speculation as to the method employed, are gained by moving the lights backwards and forwards and up and down over the screen, so that it seems to have the quality of moire silk; while simultaneously parts of the picture appear and disappear.

Working without preliminary drawings, although several days may elapse between the photographing of one picture and the next, Alexeiff and Clare Parker only alter those parts of each picture which must appear in motion, the immobile background and the other figures not requiring to be redrawn as in most animated cartoon work. They have also found that this system of working on a single picture makes it possible to move shaded objects, a thing hitherto impossible because the exactitude necessary for reproducing shading in a series of drawings could not be obtained without a certain amount of quivering appearing during projection.

Alexeiff believes that his invention gives almost unlimited scope to the artist; while it can be as easily used for ordinary cartoons as for highly imaginative three-dimensional drawings. As it is also possible to animate a still, the method can be introduced into a film taken from nature without any visible break into trick film, an experiment which was made by Alexeiff some time ago in a story picture.

M. S.

Fox hunting on Great West Road

The problem of how to express the rapid movement characteristic of life to-day is one of the major concerns of modern painting, and it is this urge for animated work which is encouraging a number of painters to venture into the cinema.

Anthony Gross and Hector Hoppin, who made the cartoon film *Joie de Vivre* in Paris before joining London Films, have now completed *The Hunt*, a cartoon in technicolour commissioned by Korda.

The Hunt is more box-office than *Joie de Vivre*, but it retains the same impression of modernity and speed, especially towards the end, when the huntsmen become entangled in the stream of cars and the traffic lights of the Great West Road. (The fox escapes.)

Gross and Hoppin work like painters with simple but sweeping lines. As action becomes complicated so the background is simplified, while the colour becomes increasingly definite.

Elimination should be first axiom in colour photography says Berthold Viertel

I am pro colour-film, in spite of the fact that I have not yet seen a dramatic (realistic) film in colour which I found satisfactory. On the other hand, the Silly Symphonies which have been born out of colour have achieved in it a perfect medium. This fact seems to indicate that operas, operettas, etc., pictures which are outside of realism and drama, belonging to the imaginative and playful *genre*, would be the first to demand colour.

The development may be as it was in sound.

First one was so delighted with the new invention that one recorded every possible sound to a lavish degree. Later on the selective principles began to work. One recorded only sounds of dramatic importance. One differentiated. Here, as in everything artistic, the first axiom is elimination.

Berthold Viertel

the German Director now making films for Gaumont-British.

One will learn by-and-by not to spread colours out as in a patchwork quilt.

The best teacher is a softly shining English morning.

How Nature uses colour in London approaches the problem closer than how Nature uses colour in Naples or Capri.

This is only partly a technical question. It is a question of vision, composition, of form.

Briefly: we have learned the scales from black to white.

We will learn the scales of the whole spectrum.

What technicians won't do, artists will.

The 39 Steps that Shook the World

Finland and Holland banned *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. It came under their category of films of 'criminal excitement.'

* * *

***Good-Night Vienna* ran for three nights only in Stockholm, but proved a success in Copenhagen.**

* * *

Medical films that have been banned for public exhibition in Britain have been allowed into Danish cinemas free of entertainment tax because of their educational value.

* * *

***Thirty-Nine Steps* has proved popular all over the world.**

Legs for Latins—Facts for Swedes

ANY EXHIBITOR WILL tell you that there is no rule of thumb by which a picture can be confidently expected to succeed in any particular area or country. Star appeal and sex appeal are ingredients which never fail—this they know—but nothing else is a surety. And even statistics, such as they are, give very little clue.

Cecil Cattermoul, of London, sends British films to more than twenty different countries, and although he has made no special analysis he has, like most exhibitors, a pretty good idea. He places film taste in two categories—Latin and Aryan.

South America, he explained, will have nothing to do with anything travel, scenic or educational. The peons want 'legs' and will stand for little else.

Spain, although it comes into the Latin category, has no particular taste in films, it seems. *Dick Turpin* proved popular there for the odd reason that the Turpin novelettes are widely read

Cecil Cattermoul

in Spain. The Spaniards like cartoon and colour films and think Pop-eye is better than Disney.

They acclaimed *King of the Damned* the greatest challenge of all to Hollywood; shouted with laughter at George Formby's slapstick in *No Limit*, and trooped in their thousands to see *Passing of the Third Floor Back*.

Malta presents a problem with its simple-minded natives and its not-so-simple-minded floating population. Here music and spectacle are a certainty and Fred Astaire is star-in-chief.

The Dutch East Indies presents a different problem altogether. A strict censorship excludes any films detrimental to 'white' prestige and military and naval films are not encouraged since the recent naval disturbance. In the Dutch East Indies British films have practically ousted German—a fact that Mr. Cattermoul attributes to a fall in the quality of the German product since the Nazi régime and possibly to their loss of some of the better known stars.

Mr. Cattermoul's story of the north countries is much more encouraging from the film-taste point of view. Patrons of Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Norway, Finland will not have their intelligence insulted. Their respective governments sympathise. Films that stimulate 'criminal excitement' are not allowed in Finland, and even *The Man Who Knew Too Much* and *King of the Damned* came under the ban. In Denmark medical films banned for public exhibition in Britain are not only shown but shown free of customary entertainment tax because of their educational value.

The film *Forgotten Men* was considered by the Danes good peace propaganda, and it too was allowed this privilege. In addition the Danish Prime Minister had an introductory speech recorded for the film.

The north countries ask for a strong and logical story and democratic treatment. They will have no horrifics and no gangsters. They like to see real life on the screen and welcome documentaries, industrials and travel pictures. Natural history is box-office and the reception of the British *Secrets of Nature* series has surprised even Britain. They want information, figures and facts, and they demand sincerity.

A recent film, *Snowstorm over Stockholm*, directed by Gunnar Skogland, goes so far as to tell the citizens how much a snowstorm costs them. *Gentlemen in Top Hats*, a Swedish film now being shown in England, is typical of Swedish interest in facts. It gives a pictorial description of Europe before and after the War, and includes scenes of Edward VII. This film has created a good deal of interest in England too and has even extracted a leader from *The Times*.

British humour goes over well in Sweden and films like *Cup of Kindness*, *Plunder* and *My Wife's Family* are popular there. These were, of course, reproduced in Swedish.

Denmark and Sweden cannot, however, be classified together. Danish and French tastes are more alike. While *Good-Night Vienna* ran for only three nights in Stockholm, it proved a success in Copenhagen. Holland, like Finland, is opposed to 'criminal excitement' and also banned *The Man Who Knew Too Much*.

The one universal denominator seems to have been *Thirty-Nine Steps*. It has proved in every country of the world a box-office winner.

Compatriot criticises Garbo

"Greta Garbo is only popular nowadays with very young girls who try to copy her looks and mannerisms," says Miss Maj Johansson, a twenty-three years old Swedish visitor. "We find her too affected and don't like the way she poses as a *femme fatale*. She is far more popular over here, although you *do* make fun of her accent and deep voice! We liked her best in *Christina of Sweden*. The history wasn't too correct, but we enjoyed the film and found Garbo less glamorous and vampish, and more humanly alive.

"On the whole we prefer German films to other foreign ones, perhaps because we all learn to speak German at school."

"How do you like going to the cinema in England?"

"Very much, because I can smoke. We're never allowed to in our cinemas. And then I can see a film any time in the afternoon or evening. In Sweden, picture houses don't open till 7 p.m. when everyone is supposed to have finished work. I prefer the architecture of our cinemas though—it is simpler and more modern."

"Is there any difference in general taste in films between the two countries?"

"We don't have the spectacular revues you seem to love. We prefer stories of modern life with dramatic situations, and one or two really first-rate actors and actresses in them. Then, we have shorter programmes, one feature, a cartoon, newsreel and interest or travel film—that is all we can manage at a time. I find two features in one programme tiring and in . . . in . . ."

"Indigestible, I think you mean."

"Yes, and there is just one more difference. Our cinemas close down altogether for two months in the summer—June and July. We love open air life too much to want to shut ourselves indoors for a couple of hours in lovely weather."

Give the Kids a Break!

Through Mickey Mouse Clubs the children of this country are being organised into regular cinema patrons. Already there are 70 Clubs with a total membership of 125,000 children.

A children's matinee

SATURDAY MORNING BELONGS to the children. In south and east London they are to be seen in their dozens, half walking, half running, little sisters and brothers in tow, with purpose in their faces, for the show begins at 9.30. Outside the cinema, the queue is a mixture of toffee apples, peanuts and expectation. Inside the early birds are being marshalled, Mickey Mouse Club members to the right, non-members to the left. Admittance for members threepence, non-members sixpence. But a sympathetic manager gives the laggards a chance. Last minute joiners, frantic with anxiety, seize their four square inches of 'open sesame' and triumphantly join their threepenny colleagues. The moment their threepences are in the till their attitude to the theatre changes. Three thousand strong, they own the place and take complete possession. Even the grandmother is insignificant as she bustles in seizing her unwilling justification by the hand. From the glint in her eye she too has purchased the magic two hours for threepence. They choose their seats like connoisseurs and change their minds a dozen times. The bloods of eleven sit in splendid segregation in the back ready to applaud and hiss as the film deserves.

Every week five London theatres have a total audience of sixteen thousand children and what an audience! Like puppies they are ready to devour anything and everything.

Exhibitors find the choice for children's programmes becoming more and more limited. Westerns and Silly Symphonies with occasional ordinary feature films and news-reels to fill in the gaps. Programme films made for hick adult audiences are still considered good enough fare for children and it is good news that with the increase of the more critical adult audiences this type of film is becoming scarce. The Westerns too are losing ground. Buck Jones, Tom Mix and Tim McCoy are the children's stars and children are sound judges but even with their favourites they are compelled to build up some kind of self-defence. They drown the dialogue with their own and when the hero makes amorous advances to the heroine, the under-eights retire to the lavatories and the bloods in the back seats take a firmer grip of their toffee apples until the blah is over and the next gun drawn.

"... toffee apples, peanuts and expectation"

Columbia Pictures has compiled ten approved programmes of six reels each for special juvenile matinees. These consist of short subjects only and they have been tried out with success in a number of American key cities.

Each of the films has been carefully inspected with the object of meeting all possible parental criticisms and revisions have been made accordingly. Columbia is co-operating with parent-teacher organisations in their distribution.

These programmes are specially designed for children under ten years of age. The whole scheme is known as the "Happy Hour" plan. The films include comedies, cartoons, sports and colour subjects.

In America, Columbia Pictures are not only alive to this new juvenile audience but are planning to cater for it. Under an entertainment scheme called the 'Happy Hour' they plan to give the children what they want. Programmes are to last an hour and are to consist of shorts, selected from cartoons, comedies, fantasies and travelogues.

All programmes under the scheme must be approved by an authorised committee representing social and educational bodies.

J. H. Seidelman, Columbia's foreign manager, who is now in England, will confer with Joe Freidman, London Managing Director of Columbia Picture Corporation, on the possibility of the 'Happy Hour' scheme being extended to this country. In using short films only, Columbia Pictures have found the answer to the children's problem.

R. I. G.

MEETINGS AND ACQUAINTANCES

BORIS KARLOFF, screen villain and monster in chief, plays a good game of shove halfpenny and a better one of darts. Village inns around Berkshire little know what a sinister person they are harbouring when this tall, distinguished looking man with the charming smile walks in for a pint of bitter and a game with the locals.

Karloff takes his job in a business-like way; has no illusions about great art, but regrets the messing up of good stories like "The Raven" of Edgar Allen Poe.

He was one of the founders of the Hollywood Guild of Screen Actors, which is just tying up with English Equity, and is an active member of the Executive. The present tendency of the big companies to merge, he says, makes the Guild doubly necessary for safeguarding the artists' interests.

MRS. NATALIE KALMUS. Blonde, vivacious, a brilliant business woman, has been in the colour business for sixteen odd years in America. Her husband, Dr. Kalmus, invented Technicolour, for which she has been leading lady, designer, scenarist—in fact chief cook and bottlewasher. She is interested in natural use of colour, "Cartoons aren't life itself," she says. Mrs. Kalmus, who is now at Denham watching over New World Pictures' all-colour *Wings of the Morning*, sees the world, visible and invisible, under the influence of colour. The planets give forth rays of different colours. (One astrologer discovered Mrs. Kalmus to have been born under the protection of seven planets.) Hence her colour vibrations. Colour can cure diseases—soft colours pacify spoilt children—and so on.

Favourite colour—all shades of orange. It is so energising.

JOSEPH KESSEL. Noted French novelist, who has seen many of his books made into films that suffered at the hands of script-writers, recently collaborated with Litvak on a new version of *L'Equipage*—his best known work. The film was a great success. Hollywood discovered Kessel, who divides his time between the French and American films.

Kessel has been in London on holiday preparatory to starting a new novel. He told *W.F.N.* that *Mary de Cork* will be filmed with his collaboration in Paris. Subsequently he will write the scenario for the Hollywood version of *Wuthering Heights*, starring Charles Boyer.

ANDRÉ DERAIN, one of the greatest living painters, has followed up his magnificent ballet-designs for Diaghileff's *Boutique Fantasque* and the dé Basil *Concurrences* with a staggering décor for the new Blum-Fokine ballet *L'Epreuve d'Amour*.

In Paris recently, at the Coupole bar, Derain talked to Grierson and Cavalcanti about the present-day commercial film (which he hates) and signified his desire to work seriously for cinema. He has strong notions on colour, and also a number of original subjects for films. One is about the Pool of London—and would make the film magnates sit up if by any chance they knew who Derain was.

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REVIEW OF REVIEWS

Edited by H. E. BLYTH

THE MARRIAGE OF CORBAL. (Karl Grune —G.F.D.)

It is not enough, if you want to make a serious film, to take a story, split it up into so many sequences which explain it, string them together so that they become an illustrated novelette, and call it a day.

—Connery Chappell, *Sunday Dispatch*

Good entertainment in a well-made, well-acted and strikingly photographed adaptation of novel by Rafael Sabatini. The settings are excellent, and the atmosphere of excitement and suspense is well maintained. General appeal: excellent. —*The Era*

The dialogue is the worst I have heard these twelve months, the scenario the silliest, and as for the acting—let me be charitable to Mr. Hugh Sinclair and the young "dumb" newcomer, Miss Hazel Terry, and put some of their faults down to Herr Grune and his international assistants.

—Graham Greene, *Spectator*

THE GREAT ZIEGFELD. (Robert Z. Leonard —M.G.M.)

An enormous monument to bad taste. And the musical movie to end musical movies. Miles of production numbers that look like they came out of the discard files. It took stupendous gall to present this as a super-special. It could have been a great caricature of the wasteful and vulgar Ziegfeld era, but the producers seem to believe that the jewel-flinging bill-dodger presented in their film is a praiseworthy character.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

The picture runs three hours, and is the most lavish display that the screen has had to offer. Its chorus numbers are gigantic and effective. The stairways down which the beauties pace, as they did in the later *Follies*, reach heights on the screen that could never be attained on any stage, but which would have surely been endorsed by Ziegfeld. Probably this style of mammoth numbers is already somewhat out of date, but then it is proper that this film should be a period piece of Broadway history.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

IT'S LOVE AGAIN. (Victor Saville—Gaumont British.)

An English song and dance picture, remarkable for the silliness of its plot and the childish charm of its heroine, Jessie Matthews.

—Mark Van Doren, *The Nation*

The British have taken another of their sober little dips into musical-comedy films, with *It's Love Again*. Massing together all the extras in the Empire, they have worked several big scenes into *It's Love Again*, which is supposed to mean that they have been unpatriotically taking lessons from Hollywood again. But the best moments in the movie are the songs sung casually by Jessie Matthews, and these are lively enough. The comedy is cumbersome, with very British stuff of the kind we don't understand over here at all. It's just embarrassing to Yankees and their kin.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Entertaining sequence of singing, dancing, love-making and farcical humour. Elaborate dancing scenes staged lavishly with wide variety of settings. Amusing dialogue: superb photography: flawless recording. —*The Cinema*

The Month's Best Criticism

THE MARRIAGE OF CORBAL.

Since Mr. Korda discovered his formula for putting a certain sparkle into British films, so that our best could be likened without shame to the ordinary run of American movies, and now that we have all become convinced that British documentaries are the top, we have tended to forget how deplorably bad, on the whole, the films of this country still are. By the easy expedient of hardly ever seeing a British film and of appreciating the ones we do see as wholeheartedly as patriotism checked by conscience will allow, we contrive to suppose that British films really aren't so bad. Anyone who clings to this comforting illusion—which it has taken us some years, after all, to acquire—should carefully avoid the picture under review.

It may be objected that to call this "a typical British" film is unfair—but the profusion of its accents, the uniformity of its dullness, its ridiculous staginess, make it all too typical. Our big films, as opposed to the negligible easy-going farces produced for home consumption, usually achieve their peculiar white-elephantine proportions of incompetence by international means. Too many cooks of any one nationality—even English—could not spoil a well-meant dish so thoroughly as this story by Rafael Sabatini has been spoiled. It needed a babel of incomprehension to produce romanticism so *rate*, sex-appeal so *kitschig*, drama so boring, and dialogue so bum. Messrs. Noah Beery and Hugh Sinclair struggled manfully in this welter of mis-direction, and Miss Hazel Terry kept a stiff upper-class lip in the face of absurdity; but their united efforts could not alter the issue. This year was bound to give us a British film even worse than *The Tunnel*; and here it is.

—John Marks, *The New Statesman & Nation*

LIMELIGHT. (Herbert Wilcox—G.F.D.)

Along with Anna Neagle, who plays the part of the chorus girl who makes good, Tracy sings his way through a flipperty backstage story, in which dowagers cluster round stage doors like tortoises and enchanting women leer down on the crooner from the stage box. You know, and I know, that the theatre is a dull place, where people work, and then have no time to do anything but start work all over again.

—Connery Chappell, *Sunday Dispatch*

It is the best-drawn picture of life behind the scenes yet put over by either British or American producers. It has no star actresses living in ornate suites of rooms half the size of the Albert Hall. There are no flashing limousines rolling up to the stage door, and no temperamental stars behaving as the most temperamental opera *prima donna* never dreamed of doing.

—S. Rossiter Shepherd, *The People*

SHOW BOAT. (James Whale—Universal.)

Helen Morgan, Paul Robeson, and Charles Winninger are back where they belong, in *Show Boat*. Never have I seen a musical show so satisfactorily and intelligently adapted. Mr. Whale has not slighted Mr. Kern's music, as he might have done, nor has he distorted Miss Ferber's story with any notions of the Coast. From story to song, and back again, the film passes with sure ease. Fine as the material is that Mr. Whale had to deal with, wise men of the profession have had as good—or, perhaps almost as good—and have muffed hopelessly the blending of the stage work with the new medium. Hollywood may be a strange world, but it has done very well by Magnolia and Ravenal and shrewish Parthy (Helen Westley) and "Ol' Man River" and "Bill" and "Can't Help Lovin' dat Man" and the Mississippi and even poor old Chicago. —John Mosher, *New Yorker*

Six years ago, film director James Whale left this country for the United States. Britain's film chiefs were unaware of his departure; anyway they didn't care.

It is a big, untidy, rowdy show, full of bustle and obvious sentiment; and as a money-maker it is what the profession calls cast-iron.

—Campbell Dixon, *Daily Telegraph*

SECRET AGENT. (Alfred Hitchcock—Gaumont-British.)

It is all a great pity; a pity because of the immense wasted talent of Mr. Peter Lorre, and because Mr. Hitchcock too has talent. How unfortunate it is that Mr. Hitchcock, a clever director, is allowed to produce and even to write his own films, even though as a producer he has no sense of continuity and as a writer he has no sense of life. —Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

The trouble about Hitchcock films is that they are too far apart. After *The Man Who Knew Too Much* we waited with undisguised impatience for *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, and, having digested its thrills, we had to put up with a gnawing emptiness for a long time. *Secret Agent* is typical Hitchcock; he has taken Somerset Maugham's novel "Ashenden," strained through the sieve of his individual mind, and subtracted the meat to make a stimulating broth of his own concoction.

—Ian Coster, *Evening Standard*

NEXT TIME WE LIVE. (Edward G. Griffith—Universal.)

I wonder if you remember an old masterpiece called *The Crowd?* Something of that ordinary-folks reality, but not all of it, informs this story and makes it moving. At times it positively hurts. And the pain of realism never did a moviegoer any harm. —Stephen Watts, *Sunday Express*

I find it rather hard not to overpraise *Next Time We Live*, which is not important, not startingly original, not even very good cinema, but gave me personally a good deal of pleasure. Some of it is unclear, and none of it is new, but it touches on the little, poignant, commonplace things of life quite sensitively, and keeps you interested beyond their merits in the tiny problems of everyday.—C. A. Lejeune, *Observer*

Review of Reviews *(continued)*

WALT DISNEY.

Who Killed Cock Robin? is, I am sorry to say is flat, a vulgar job, and what is worse from an artist's viewpoint it is an inferior job of draughtsmanship. *Pluto's Judgment Day* is not so vulgar, but just as blatant, and—which is possibly the worst sin of all—rarely funny. From the time of *Mickey's Gala Première* onwards Disney has been infected by a new and somehow morbid zeal for social protest, not so far removed from the sort of thing that makes people with a lesser sense of draughtsmanship scribble on fences with chalk.

—C. A. Lejeune, *Sunday Observer*

In *Mickey's Garden* Walt Disney again creates nightmare. Inadvertently inhaling some insect powder, Mickey shrinks to insignificance, and with great fertility of ideas and colour, Disney shows the smaller microbe's view of the insect world—a jungle inhabited by fierce and grotesque giants. At this rate, his films will soon be unfit for children under sixteen.

—Henry Adler, *New English Weekly*

THE MAN WHO BROKE THE BANK AT MONTE CARLO. (Stephen Roberts—Twentieth Century-Fox.)

And the bank wasn't the only thing that was broken. My heart was nearly split in twain that anyone should try to make a film out of such a poor story. With the Albert Hall scene in mind, I could not help but wonder what Hitchcock would have done with the scene at the baccarat tables. The whole thing was much too aloof to create any tension, even when Colman staked all his winnings. —*The Isis*

Victor McLaglen in "Professional Soldier"

LAW OF THE JUNGLE. (Carveth Wells—Wardour Films.)

Mr. Wells scorns the use of elaborate studio equipment and in this case had only a small hand camera which was operated either by himself or by his native assistant. We do not know just how much of the film each was responsible for, but their combined efforts have produced photography which for the most part is indifferent and on occasions really bad. The completed picture resembles nothing so much as a tattered scrap-book from which some of the pages are already missing. —*The Times*

It is my object to show that the popular idea of "darkest Africa" is absolutely wrong and the result of the enormous library of books on Africa that describe conditions in the Belgian Congo and then brand the whole of Africa with that most misleading "darkest."

—*Carveth Wells*

ANNA KARENINA. (Clarence Brown—M.G.M.)

It does by the sheer competence of the actors succeed in telling a very sad, if bewildering story. And anyway this is the first time that an ex-editor of *The Isis* (Gyles Isham) has kissed Greta Garbo.

—*The Isis*

THE KING STEPS OUT. (Josef von Sternberg—Columbia.)

The lovely and golden-voiced Miss Grace Moore has stepped lightly from the pedestal of grand opera to the frothy stage of Viennese operetta in her new picture *The King Steps Out*. P.S.—You may remember that Miss Moore threatened to leave Hollywood because she had to spend an entire day in milking a cow and singing during the making of *The King Steps Out*. After all that furore, the cow-milking scene does not appear: it must have been left on the cuttin'-room floor. *Sic transit gloria* bossy.

—Frank S. Nugent, *New York Times*

THE TRAIL OF THE LONESOME PINE. (Henry Hathaway—Paramount.)

In *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*—which tells the story of a feud between two primitive families in the hills of Kentucky—colour is used merely to put real landscapes vividly on the screen. But it does this well enough to arouse occasionally those gasps of surprise with which the spectator might greet a suddenly revealed view of an exceptionally opulent sunset. It will be popular because thousands of people, leading dull grey lives, are hungry for colour—simply for colour; which means that the provision of adequately rewarded opportunities for the artist in the film industry is largely a social problem, for a public whose human needs are starved will want realistic food substitutes, not art, on the screen.

—Charles Davy, *London Mercury*

The Trail of the Lonesome Pine is epoch-making. I am certain that if I saw half-a-dozen films of this quality in quick succession my delight in the black and white films would be seriously diminished. It is a superb production. It leaps forward in a new film art form. It is out-of-doors beauty. The glowing enchantment of nature is brought to the screen.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *Sunday Times*

It is just bad bright picture-postcard stuff, and a still would disclose how crude.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

It's Love Again

DANGEROUS. (Alfred E. Green—Warner Bros.)

A second-rate picture with first-rate trimmings, the fundamental absurdity of *Dangerous* is partially disguised in the suave dialogue written for it by Laird Doyle and by the presence of Bette Davis, currently Hollywood's No. 1 impersonator of *femmes fatales*, whose wicked eye-poppings outdo those with which she made her reputation in *Of Human Bondage*. Typical shot: Franchot Tone muttering, "It can't go on like this." —*Time*

There is not a lot of action in the picture—it is definitely a conversation piece—but the acting is so good all round, the dialogue so well written and the direction so sensitive and clean cut that one does not notice the lack of pictorial development. —*Picturegoer*

THE LITTLEST REBEL. (David Butler—Fox.)

Those who are given to the study of such things may have wondered why it is that at a time when so much is being talked about the value of sex-appeal and glamour in the cinema an extensive popularity contest should yet reveal a little girl of seven to be top of a list in which Miss Mae West finds herself eleventh and Miss Greta Garbo forty-fourth. The story of *The Littlest Rebel*, Miss Shirley Temple's latest picture, amounts to no more than usual, but the period is that of the American Civil War and the place one of those old and rather charming Southern estates which we so often see pictured on the screen, where the negro slaves are always faithful and contented, the master of the house wears a broad-brimmed hat and drinks mint juleps, and the age of hustle is yet unknown.

—*The Times*

I confess to having failed twice in my attempts to remain present throughout a Shirley Temple picture. When the child is natural she is sweet and attractive. She has a naughty little face, caught in moments when the expression is involuntary. But her lines are spoken with a mechanised precocity I find intolerable.

—Stephen Watts, *Sunday Express*

"The Marriage of Corbal"

Anna Neagle in "Limelight"

PETTICOAT FEVER. (George Fitzmaurice—M.G.M.)

Petticoat Fever is an Arctic matrimonial trifle; a rather tiresome little whimsy in blubber. It has the distinction of being the only film I remember in which Miss Myrna Loy has seemed to me almost wholly devoid of charm, and Mr. Robert Montgomery little better than a crashing bore.

—C. A. Lejeune, *Sunday Observer*

A bleak, blizzardly, muffled and mysterious picture, set amid the Arctic Wastes and starring several actors—all practically unidentifiable by reason of their being swathed to the eyes in garments to keep out the cold.

—Paul Dehn, *Sunday Referee*

PROFESSIONAL SOLDIER. (Tay Garnett—Twentieth-Century—Fox.)

I liked the whole improbable picture, especially the scenes of violence and those in which McLaglen tells Freddie of his adventures. Child actors are not everybody's choice. But Freddie puts in a fine bit of work as a young monarch who has to face the firing-squad.

—Gale Pedrick, *The Star*

Professional Soldier should be carefully avoided. Mr. McLaglen does his best, but Master Freddie Bartholomew never begins to act. He never has begun as far as I know. He recites his words by rote in whatever part he plays, and his directors help him to exercise a lustrous and repulsive charm. The setting and costumes in these Ruritanian stories have a character of their own: plumes and barley sugar pillars, unbecoming trousers and ornate mantelpieces.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

THESE THREE. (Sam Goldwyn — United Artists.)

These Three is, of course, the screen adaptation of Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour*, and quite a good piece of work has been done with this somewhat problematic drama. *The Children's Hour*, as you may know, has to do with the friendship of two young women, a friendship characterised by such emotional under-currents as are not held seemly for screen exposition. The theatregoing public of Manhattan and environs may comprehend such matters, but it is not to be expected that the great movie public would care to hear them discussed, or would understand them if they were. —John Mosher, *New Yorker*

All is natural: feeling has the right air of spontaneity; loyalty the right undramatic note; love the proper emphasis and speech; even at the most intense moments, a naturalness and hesitancy which make it always verbal and never written. In a world of film mediocrity anything outside it is in danger of receiving praise beyond its merits. *These Three* is merely a film of normal adult intelligence. —*The Times*

ANTHONY ADVERSE. (Warners — Mervyn Leroy.)

For many months now, in conversations on the cinema, the film of *Anthony Adverse* has been the subject of amused comment. To those who had read Hervey Allen's immensely long and crowded novel, it seemed impossible to compress its story within the limits of a single film—and foolish to try! Nine books, 1,269 closely-printed pages, hundreds of thousands of words, an ever-changing inter-Continental background, hundreds of fully developed characters: here surely was a mass of material which would defy condensation, a test in compression which made the film treatment of *Crime and Punishment* seem like a schoolboy's précis. Now the film has emerged, and it is no longer a subject for fantastic rumour and comic comment. In so far as condensation is concerned, indeed, *Anthony Adverse*, the film, is a remarkable feat which calls for unhesitating congratulation.

—Forsyth Hardy, *The Scotsman*

FURY. (Fritz Lang—M.G.M.)

This picture is different, volatile, eruptive melodrama. In its class, in which several that are characteristically similar have proved box office attractions, such as *Scarface*, *The Big House*, *Fugitive from a Chain Gang* and *Black Fury*, it is an exceedingly good picture. Basically, it is a grim story of a desperate man and the amazing lengths to which he went to exact vengeance on society. It is absolutely without comedy relief. It has only a modicum of romance, a love interest which in its human interest character is powerful in the manner in which it is made one of the picture's ingredients. The entertainment the show provides is that which is expected of stark melodrama.

—McCarthy, *Motion Picture Herald*

One of the most significant and impressive of screen offerings. —*Variety*

TRUTH BY RADIO BY BERNARD SHAW

I have to speak to everybody, and I never could do that until this wonderful invention of the radio and the microphone enabled me to do it. I know very well that my friend Mr. Wells has told us that when you buy a wireless set you never use it after the first two days, and that here I am, talking to absolute vacancy under the impression that I am talking to millions. But I do not believe that. I always believe and feel that I really am talking to millions.

The politicians have not yet found out the microphone. They still imagine that they are addressing political meetings, and they do not understand that the microphone is a terrible tell-tale and a ruthless detective. If you speak insincerely on the platform to a political meeting, especially at election time, the more insincere you are, the more they cheer you and the more they are delighted. But if you try that on the microphone, it gives you away instantly. The sober citizen at his fireside hears nothing but a senseless ranting by a speaker whose pretended earnestness is the result of the extra pint of champagne which has loosened his tongue and fuddled away his conscience and common sense.

If there is anything wrong with you, remember that the microphone will make the worst of it. If you nerve yourself to face it by taking, say, half a glass of whisky, the microphone will convince all the listeners that you are shockingly drunk. I can tell by listening what the speaker has had for dinner.

The microphone tells you other things as well: for instance, where you were born. It brings out and exaggerates your native accent mercilessly. Tones in your voice that the naked ear cannot hear become audible through the microphone, betraying thoughts and feelings that you think you are concealing from every living listener. The preacher who is a hypocrite is unmasked as completely as the Cabinet Minister who is a bunk merchant. When this becomes known, it will raise the moral level of public life. It will raise the character of public speaking. It will even raise the character of our existing platform politicians, who will broadcast not as spellbinders, but as repentant humbugs. Speeches made through the microphone to millions of listeners will take on a necessary sincerity hitherto unknown. If the speakers are insincere or pretentious for a moment, they will be found out and despised. And it is not very pleasant to be found out. I will go on so far as to say that when all parliamentary orators have to use the microphone most of the Governments at present in power will vanish into private life with badly damaged reputations.

I do not think this side of the microphone has ever been pointed out before. It is curious: it puts you into the confessional box. It makes you a perfectly different man. When I go away from the microphone and begin to speak to my friends I tell them all sorts of things that I do not believe, because I think it will please them. But at the microphone I know that those of you who have good ears will catch me out every time that I attempt to gammon you. Moral: never listen to great statesmen or great churchmen except through your wireless set.

As a performer at the microphone, George Bernard Shaw is, of course, unique. His mastery of the natural and intimate style gives special value to this analysis. We now publish for the first time a talk given by Shaw for the film "B.B.C., the Voice of Britain." Mr. Shaw has amended the film version for publication in "World Film News."

I TALK TO YOU

BY STEPHEN KING-HALL

Is there such a thing as technique of the microphone? I suppose I should be a bad trade unionist—if there were a Union of Broadcasters—were I to deny the existence of such a thing. I can only say that I am not conscious of such a technique. Perhaps that fact is the answer. When I broadcast I pay no attention at all to the microphone. I talk. I consider it to be the business of the engineers to collect my observations in a microphone and transmit them through aerials. Sometimes they hang a thing in front of me and sometimes, as for example at the world-wide Jubilee broadcasts, they strap a thing like a matchbox to my chest. But whatever they do I just go on talking.

Note that I say talking, and not speech-making or reading. Whom do I talk to? The answer is YOU (in the singular). I make myself believe that you want to hear what I have to say and I try to imagine what you would say to me if you could answer back, and then I answer that question. I don't mind inflicting myself on you like this because I know you can get rid of me by turning a knob.

Of course I have notes because one does not wish to waste time, either mine or yours, and also because I talk on very controversial subjects, and the B.B.C. has to know what I am proposing to say. Even so they have to trust me not to do the dirty on the Broadcasting service (which includes the listeners, the B.B.C. and myself) by playing tricks with my voice. A very simple and harmless phrase on paper can become anything when spoken. Take the case of the sentence:

"I admire Herr Hitler,"

and say it as you would imagine it would be said by a Communist, and by Herr Goebbels, and you will see what I mean. One cannot lie when talking to thousands of people partly because it would be so monstrous to try to take advantage of one's privileged position, and partly because some of them would bowl you out, and then you would be very properly forbidden to come near the microphone again.

I am very interested in this business of rendering a personal service to the public and of being an interpreter of current events. I am about to start an experiment in the shape of a weekly letter to a list of subscribers.

Stephen King-Hall was born in 1893. Entering the Navy at 14, he served throughout the War and retired in 1929 at Commander's rank. During his naval career he published two books, one on the Far Eastern Situation and one on Imperial Defence.

On December 15th, 1928, sceptical of possessing any microphone ability, King-Hall gave his first broadcast. On the way home he overheard a complimentary remark about it, and thereafter took broadcasting seriously. In October 1930, he gave a children's talk called "Here and There" in which he explained in simple form the problems behind some of the political and economic events of the day. The "Here and There" talks have been given weekly ever since.

VOX POP PUTS AMERICA ON THE SPOT

by Isaac James

"O.K., Joe, I've got it."

The staccato speech of a crack radio announcer comes through the loudspeakers into thousands of American homes. It spatters on.

"Stand right here, sir, and talk right into the little box. It's a microphone. Don't be afraid, can't bite cha. That's it. You said your name was . . . ?"

"Wilson . . . Frank L."

The voice that replies is gruff and low pitched. It belongs to a man in middle age and just now it quavers. We listeners find it strange to detect nervousness in a voice of such solid quality. But we have no time to think about it. The announcer goes on, relentlessly. Never does a fraction of a second elapse between the end of an answer and the beginning of a new question.

"And you come from . . . ?"

"Well, I live in Miami, but I originally came from Chicago."

"You live in Miami, but you're from Chicago. Good. A sun-worshipper, is that it? Followed the birdies down south? Nothing like Florida bathing, eh, Mr. Wilson?"

"Nothing like it. But . . . er . . . I'm not down for the usual thing . . . That is, I'm in business there."

"Quite right . . . business before pleasure. . . . A good maxim, Mr. Wilson . . . or are you in the pleasure business, hotel, cafe, something like that?"

Mr. Wilson is regaining his composure. His reply is prefaced with a gruntish laugh in appreciation of the pun.

"No, not exactly. . . . I'm in the fruit business . . . wholesale end."

"An orange grower . . . well, this is a pleasant surprise . . . where are your groves, Mr. Wilson?"

"I don't have groves. . . . I'm in the jobbing business. . . . I buy the fruit from the citrus farmers and ship it. . . . "

"Oh . . . the famous middleman. . . . You have a hard life, don't you. You have to 'take' it from the farmer and from the greengrocer as well. . . . I don't envy you, Mr. Wilson. . . . But you must be an expert on citrus fruits?"

"Well, I've been in the business twenty-two years. . . . I guess I've picked up a little information."

"Good . . . then you can probably answer this question. Tell me, why has it been found impossible to preserve orange juice?"

"But that's not true. . . . I sell millions of bottles of orangeade every year. It's absolutely pure and. . . ."

"But that's orangeade. . . . I'm talking about plain orange juice. . . . The drink that begins the day for sixty per cent of the people of this country. . . . It can't be preserved . . . yet . . . scientists and business men have been working on the problem for years. . . . There are millions waiting for the bird who finds the answer. . . . Do you know what the trouble has been?"

"No, I can't exactly say that I do."

"Well, I don't either. . . but one of the reasons given is that the orange juice contains too much water and therefore too much hydrogen. . . . The bio-organisms can't be controlled. . . . There's no way to prevent souring. . . . But maybe that question was too technical. Try this one. Orange is an acid fruit, isn't it?"

Artists of New Radio Feature

"Yes."

"Well, when I eat an orange, is the reaction in my stomach acid or alkaline?"

"Acid."

"No, I'm afraid you're wrong. The reaction is alkaline. . . . But enough of science. . . . I can see by your pretty wife here that you have a good eye for beauty. . . . Can you tell me the name of a painter who became famous because of his pictures of oranges?"

"No, I don't think I can."

We can again detect an uneasiness in Mr. Wilson's voice. Embarrassment rather than timidity is probably the cause this time.

"His name was Sorrolla. He was called the sunlight painter of Spain and his pictures of the Seville orange groves are all considered masterpieces. Look him up. . . . Reproductions of those paintings might sell a lot of oranges. But let's go on. Oranges have a lot to do with health, haven't they?"

"Yes, they have. The doctors say the children must have the vitamins and body building characteristics of oranges . . . why, more than . . ."

"Exactly . . . and the doctor is always right, isn't he, Mr. Wilson?"

"Well, most of the time, I guess. We all make mistakes, but I always say you've got to have faith in someone in a time of sickness and trouble."

"Of course you do . . . and the doctors of America deserve our whole-hearted confidence. . . . But what about socialised medicine, Mr. Wilson, do you feel it's a good thing?"

"I don't quite understand what you mean."

"Well, there's been a movement on for some years to have the doctors work for a state institute of health. They get so much salary a year and in return charge their patients no fees. The idea is to make more frequent and better medical service available to everyone. What do you think of it?"

"Sounds like a good thing for the poor. . . . But I'm not sure it would work out . . . kinda socialistic. . . . I believe a good doctor is entitled to make a good living."

"I see, and you feel he would be underpaid working for the Government. Of course, that's one way of looking at it. Just one more question now and our curiosity will be satisfied. Tell me, when you've made enough money to retire . . . will you keep on living in Florida or will you go back to Chicago?"

Mr. Wilson is on solid ground now. His tone is firm and decisive.

"I'm never going to have enough money to retire. I believe work keeps you alive. The day I quit work is the day I'm going to die."

"That's a healthy attitude, Mr. Wilson. But what I wanted to tell you is that whether you live in Miami or Chicago, in Frisco or in Boston, you can get Carcacola Shaving Soap at your corner drug store. Here's a free tube for you with the compliments of the Carcacola Company . . . and thank you very much. . . . O.K., Joe, take it away!"

The broadcast is over. We have not been listening in on a public torture chamber nor to a new method of proving P. T. Barnum's epigram, "There's a sucker born every minute!" The commercially-minded catechism is a new radio feature introduced last year by a group of bright young newspapermen who thought that Americans might be just as interested in the thoughts, opinions, knowledge and reactions of their fellow-citizens as they are in the so-called entertainment that is usually offered by the large broadcasting chains. Their programme is vernacularly entitled "Vox Pop."

The young men appear in various public places in New York City each Sunday afternoon armed with microphone and a direct wire to the broadcasting studio. The lobby of one of the great Rockefeller Centre skyscrapers is a typical setting for their manœuvres. An announcer goes up to one of the visitors strolling around on a sight-seeing tour. He invites him to be interviewed over the air . . . just a few questions . . . ten minutes of his time. The visitor's vanity usually triumphs over his fear and the show has begun.

The questions come thick and fast. They are sometimes nasty, sometimes facetious, serious, deceitful, complicated or extremely personal. The answers vary according to the intelligence of the victim. A young schoolgirl from New Hampshire may show herself to be well-informed, alert, and the proud possessor of a set of mid-Victorian moral standards. A chemist from Indiana may turn out to be slow, muddled, wise about nothing but chemistry, and a firm believer in free love. Mothers betray horrible ignorance of child rearing. Students disclose a keener knowledge of economics than successful business men. Most people don't realise how silly they sound and the announcers are wonderful at "covering up."

The programmes were becoming quite popular when I left America. They had definite appeal to the intellectual sadism of the radio audiences and provided an exciting sequel to the Amateur Hour craze. A man can now sit in his own home and hear his neighbour making a fool of himself. It's fun . . . and amateur sociology.

In Town To-night

BY A. W. HANSON

"IN TOWN TO-NIGHT" tries to give listeners some idea of other people's lives and jobs. It comes under Variety, and its principal aim is entertainment. But if, in the course of over five hundred broadcast interviews with all sorts and conditions of people we have added a sociological reference as well, so much the better.

Each programme lasts twenty minutes. Into that time we have to get as much meat as possible, and at the same time watch the balance of the whole. We therefore work on a basis of six interviews of 2½ minutes each, which with five minutes of music and introductory matter makes up the full time.

Our material comes from three main sources: our own staff, outside contacts, and the daily press. Among those selected for interviews have been people who cannot read, and are totally blind. When we get hold of a promising subject we pump him for his life story, his views on his work and his home, his likes and dislikes, and his opinions on everything we think may interest and entertain. Often a man will talk for two hours about himself and his doings. We have to extract the peak-points of what he tells us, and condense them into 2½ minutes of programme-time.

For that reason we very rarely trust to an impromptu dialogue between the interviewer and the subject on the night of transmission. I say very rarely, for on one occasion, just after Christmas, we did go into the street and ask the first passer-by to come up to the studio and tell how he had spent his Christmas. Five people in succession flatly refused.

The meat of the story extracted, we write it up in interview form of question and answer. If the subject has not broadcast before we take the script to his home and go over it with him, altering the dialogue to fit his natural style.

On the evening of transmission we rehearse each of our six victims in front of the microphone for fifteen minutes. This gives us a chance to eliminate the tendency to 'read' scripts, and also to combat nervousness. At all costs we must replace the 'dentist's waiting-room suspense' by easy confidence; and by the time the red light begins to flash for transmission we have usually succeeded.

Two dustmen before the microphone for "In Town To-night"

D——D INDEED!

"The 100th edition of 'In Town To-night' celebrates one of the most popular activities of the B.B.C. This feature delights us all because we feel that it breathes with reality. No phrase on the wireless brought more widespread pleasure than that of the man who said to his chaperon: 'Take your d . . . d finger off the page, I can't see.'"

The Star, June 6th, 1936.

For more than two years "In Town To-night" has brought people from every phase of life to the microphone to talk about themselves. June 6th saw the broadcast of its hundredth programme."

The producer behind "In Town To-night" is A. W. Hanson. He originated the programme in November 1933, and has built it up into the favourite it is to-day. In this special interview he explains his methods of working.

"Queen Mary" Transmission disappoints George Audit

"We were led to expect something pretty sensational from the 'Queen Mary' broadcasts. Every B.B.C. publication was covered with diagrams, illustrations and write-ups for weeks beforehand. Much money was spent in the preparations. There were over a dozen of the B.B.C.'s technical and programme staff besides Messrs. Roger Eckersley, John Watt and Henry Hall with his band on board. But in the presence of the 'Queen Mary' the B.B.C. behaved rather like the young girl who was so overcome at being presented to the President of the United States that all she could murmur was 'Oh, Mr. Roosevelt . . .'"

At the send-off from Southampton's Ocean Dock the entire impression was given through the commentators. Mr. George Blake was the "catalytic agent" who followed the "Queen Mary" from her launching on the Clyde to her arrival in New York harbour. He is rather inflexible in his style of speaking, but on the whole he managed a difficult job sufficiently well.

Once or twice during the embarkation you were switched over to the microphones placed in the vicinity of the winches, the engine-room and the bridge "to pick up whatever may be going on," but—silence, or only a faint sound above the rushing of the open mikes. What was needed to give you an impression of the life of the liner were the voices of an engineer preparing his engines, of a sailor actually at the winches, of a passenger saying good-bye to his family.

But everything was left to the commentators, and they, like nearly all B.B.C. commentators with the notable exception of Mr. Bowman, never succeeded in making you feel you were in the middle of all the excitement.

It is interesting to compare Paramount's version of the "Queen Mary's" sailing with the B.B.C.'s. In the space of a few minutes the film showed the harbour, the ship, the quayside, the embarkation, a quick tour over the ship's interior, and shots of her moving out to sea. The film even made a better job of the sound—you did hear the winches working and the passengers talking.

The transmissions en route were disappointing. There was certainly John Snagge's peroration on the subject of a British ship with an English captain, a Welsh chief engineer and a Scottish birthplace, but otherwise the material was uninteresting and the quality of the transmissions poor. The B.B.C.'s trouble was that the "Queen Mary" is more difficult to represent as a ship than a Grimsby trawler would be in similar circumstances. A floating hotel is not a good subject for an outside broadcast. But the "Queen Mary" broadcasts will not have been wasted if they teach the important lesson that every subject for an actuality programme must be considered as being suitable or not on its own merits, and in terms of itself.

The Three Great Silences of Portland Place

BY I. A. JACOBY

We live, you remember, in an age of specialisation. The chestnut must have slipped from my memory when I cheerfully accepted an assignment to interview the newly appointed B.B.C. television chiefs. Though years have elapsed since I pounded an honest typewriter in journalism's sordid name, the possibility of failure in this task never occurred to me. First of all I have been interviewed frequently and by good reporters, in my erratic career as producer and film director; I thought I remembered their questions. Secondly I am favoured with the acquaintance of numerous individuals associated with what is loosely called the entertainment world: never have I had the slightest occasion to accuse them of reticence, morbid secretiveness or of a passion to steal away by themselves into dark corners. Imagine my chagrin when I must now report to you that I have returned with empty notebook and a profound ignorance of the great spectacles that are about to burst forth on your television screen.

The proposed victims of my reportorial rampage were Messrs. Cecil Lewis, Dallas Bower and Hyam Greenbaum. I boldly tried to reach my prey at Broadcasting House. In the course of the week that followed this effort became a full-time job for my persevering secretary. Our telephone conversation with England's radio centre was continuous and the game continually eluded us.

Notice, please, how I have come to use words like victims, prey and game. I am not, by instinct or talents, a hunting man. Rabbits can perch a

few yards in front of my loaded rifle and jeer at my marksmanship without loss of dignity or life; my reaction at such times is one of injured vanity rather than one of unsatiated bloodthirstiness. But by degrees the proposed interview developed the sanguine characteristics of a chase. When I found I was involved in a man hunt I developed unpleasant faculties and suddenly I remembered having met Mr. Greenbaum at a musical supper given in honour of the great Szigeti. Dishonourably I used my host's name and got through to him. Experienced showman that he is, he displayed all the frankness and cordiality that I had expected. We arranged to meet a few days later at his favourite place of refreshment. I thought that my luck had changed: later I found out that a rehearsing trombonist in his room and my American accent on the 'phone had combined to give him the impression that I represented the *Chicago Daily News*.

The turn of fortune seemed definite the next day when Dallas Bower telephoned in answer to one of the messages I had left at his office. O. Huntsman, has the fox ever walked into your parlour? I rushed to speak to Mr. Bower with joy in my voice and a little list of questions in my hand. But hardly had one of the latter been popped when I realised that success, so close now, was not to be my fate. Mr. Bower thought that the time was premature for talk of plans or hopes or feelings or aspirations. He had "nothing to say about the immediate future of television."

This statement all effacing came, please remember, from the man who has just published a book entitled "Plan for Cinema," forecasting the future, demanding reforms, dreaming of "a special re-creation of activity," revolutionising production, technique and discarding all present values. Naturally it produced a surprised pause in my questioning. And that pause proved my downfall, for Mr. Bower took advantage of the split second and turned me over to a man who must have been standing at his side during our short-lived conversation.

That man I have since come to think of as the most formidable shield in the National Defence. He introduced himself as Mr. Thompson, and told me he was in charge of publicity for the television department. He graciously offered to answer all of my questions, to give me any information I wanted, in fact to tell me all. I explained that I wanted personal interviews with Lewis, Bower and Greenbaum, that I was interested in them as individuals, that I was not seeking an official statement. Alas, that was something beyond the authority of Mr. Thompson. The gentlemen were not permitted to give personal opinions or express personal views. I was politely told that it was not fair to the B.B.C. or to the executives in question to ask them about their own attitudes to the work they are beginning. This was my curtain cue; after all, I have always endeavoured to be fair and square and, furthermore, I am now a grateful guest in a strange land and my ethics are, so to speak, on parade. Moreover, there was something about Mr. Thompson's voice that caused me to believe that mere unfairness would never win me the interview. When our three appointees had joined the television service they must have forsworn their ordinary rights of expression both as men and, what is hard to believe, as artists. Mr. Thompson was seeing to it that they did not cheat the devil of his due.

My last attempt to gain information for this article was made under such defeated conditions. I came to the meeting I had arranged with Mr. Greenbaum feeling something like Mata Hari on her way to supper with an adjutant in the War Office. I found myself wondering about the exact connection between B.B.C. and the Cabinet and about the penalties for espionage or blabbing about the Government's affairs so soon after a Thomas episode. But all hope of treason and sedition were banished when I arrived at the scene. Mr. Greenbaum was waiting for me . . . but so was Mr. Thompson with Dallas Bower safely tucked away behind him.

That meeting shall always be a blot on my reputation as a newshawk. There was the chance for a scoop, for an inside story, for unearthing a hidden secret. And I was convinced by now that the most exciting secrets were concealed all over the place. How I longed for the reporting technique that makes every nonchalant question a far reaching probe, that can twist light comments into significant answers, that is subtle, relentless and scientific. Even the enemy was expecting some kind of show. They sat there, *en garde*, ready to ward off the vicious sorties that, alas, were never to be made.

What happened was that I mumbled my little catechism and Mr. Thompson saved the others all trouble by supplying his ready responses quickly and pointedly. Once when the guardian made a brief excursion to the bar, Mr. Greenbaum confided that he was forming the first Television Orchestra of the World, and that for once sex appeal would be a consideration in the choice of a bassoon player. His voice carried, however, and Mr. Thompson came rushing back with an apprehensive "What did he say? What was that?"

I really should add that Mr. Bower seemed slightly embarrassed by the precautions taken on his behalf for he soon appreciated that he had nothing to fear from my inept delving. When I pointed out the strangeness of his having no quotable views on television ("It's just an experiment now!") although he was selected for his post from a list of hundreds of applicants, many of whom had expressed some very definite ideas, he was fairly bursting to talk. But the regulations were rigid.

Mr. Cecil Lewis never did appear. But if he did I wouldn't ask him a word about his ambitions in the new medium. I am now perfectly willing to believe that no one knows anything about television—least of all the B.B.C. staff. What I would like to have from Mr. Lewis, were I clever enough to get him alone, is a short essay on "Red Tape and the Creative Arts."

U.S. Radio Fights Political Control

BY ALISTAIR COOKE

> 'I recognise that these words which I have chosen with deliberation will not prove popular in any nation that chooses to fit this shoe to its foot. . . . World peace and world goodwill are blocked by only ten or fifteen per cent of the world's population. . . . In the field of international finance we have, so far as we are concerned, put an end to dollar diplomacy, to money grubbing, to speculation for the benefit of the powerful and rich, at the expense of the small and the poor.' (*Applause.*)

ON THE EVENING of the 3rd January many British listeners, hearing these words in the first news-bulletin, must have joined politely in the roar of applause that went up in Washington. But few could have guessed that the speech would become possibly more famous in the history of broadcasting than in the history of the United States. The applause that the President himself heard was, as Republicans were angrily aware, being echoed to countless millions of U.S. voters. For the second time only in American history the President was making his traditional speech to Congress in the evening—the other time was the momentous extra session of 2nd April 1917; for the first time it was being heard by the electorate.

Determined that the cheering should carry no disturbing echo, Republicans maintained a stolid silence until the last paragraph of the forty-five minute oration. But as soon as the President had said, 'I cannot better end this message on the state of the Union . . .', they emitted what the press dubbed 'a derisive roar,' thus reminding the world at large of their view that the President was abusing for political ends his Constitutional privilege.

When the President had first requested that his speech should be postponed and delivered at a night session of Congress, at an hour when the maximum radio audience could be assured, there was a loud Republican protest, most audibly from Henry P. Fletcher, the Republican Chairman. To soften Republican wrath, the Democratic party allowed a Republican leader to broadcast from the House of Representatives on the morning of the 3rd, an official protest against the Roosevelt precedent. 'Is there going to be anything in that message,' asked the Republican spokesman, 'that will not stand the light of the mid-day sun?' That rhetorical jab was the last objection that the history books may note. But behind the scenes, the protest was being elaborated in a series of letters exchanged between the Republican National Committee and the Columbia Broadcasting System.

With remarkable foresight and good sense*, Columbia has now made this evidence available by reprinting and publishing that correspondence. This twenty-page pamphlet †, costing three cents for postage, is more vital to the future of broadcasting than many more expensive works, a better book on the subject than any this year, the first attempt in any year to define the democratic principle and an ethic for political broadcasting.

MAIN ISSUES OF CONTROVERSY

1. Is the American Radio System under political control, or does it consult first the national interest? The Republicans say 'Yes'—Columbia, 'No.'

2. Is broadcasting to be free for the dramatising and sentimentalising of political issues? The Republicans say 'Yes'—Columbia, 'No.'

The protagonists are: Henry P. Fletcher, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, and William S. Paley, President of the Columbia Broadcasting System. But their dignity was engaged only after a mild, official correspondence about a series of planned broadcasts turned into a discussion of principle and when, presumably to Mr. Paley, the Republican Party seemed to be dictating to Columbia a policy for political broadcasts.

On 13th December the Director of the Republican Party radio division wrote the Vice-President of Columbia asking simply for times and periods on the air to be used for 'such vehicles as the Republican National Committee may in its opinion deem to be proper for carrying the Republican message to the people.' The Vice-President evidently found something in this letter to make him believe that the Republican plans had 'turned in other directions': the Republicans wanted a particular man to write transcriptions—apparently dramatic transcriptions. The Vice-President thereupon concisely stated the Columbia policy followed for the past three administrations, which has been, briefly:—

1. *Not to sell time for political broadcasting until after the regular party conventions next summer, but to give time free, and evenly between the two parties, before an election campaign is on; to sell it after the conventions, when the parties want more time and regular periods too valuable to give away.*
2. *Even after the conventions not to allow* 'DRAMATISATION *of political issues.*'

William S. Paley

He went on to explain the reasons for this policy. On the first point, they felt discussion of political issues to be 'our duty as a public service.' On the second point—'appeals to the electorate should be intellectual and not based on emotion, passion or prejudice . . . the dramatic method would over-emphasise incidents of minor importance and significance,' and American voters would not be able to discriminate fairly among dramatisations, so that the turn of national issues might well depend on the skill of warring dramatists rather than on the merits of the issue debated.

So accomplished a rebuff drew no letter but a telegram, sent on the 1st January, from Henry P. Fletcher direct to William Paley. The argument now begins in formal politeness, rises through a crescendo of peremptory rhetoric and ends with a verbal sword-thrust. It had better be summarised this way:

FLETCHER to PALEY, Telegram, 1st Jan.

> You are broadcasting the President's speech to Congress. 'If this be true . . . I respectfully request that your company allot on some closely following day the same amount of time over the same stations at the same hour of the day given to Mr. Roosevelt' for Republican broadcast. 'The essence of American democracy and free speech is fairness. If you grant my request it will demonstrate that you are in no way influenced by fear of the party in power.'

—at this point the courtesies begin to give way to irony—

> 'The President's decision to dramatise his message and to bring down to the level of a political speech his constitutional right and duty to address the Congress on the state of the Union is understandable in the light of past performances.' Apparent that President considers members of both houses as 'only incidentally his audience' and will be addressing electorate 'as a part of his campaign for re-election.' We request 'equal opportunity.'

PALEY to FLETCHER, Telegram, 2nd Jan.

> Have considered letter 'with great care.' You are free to ascribe motives to President's decisions. But we should not be asked 'to base allotments of time on such interpretation by you or others.' The Columbia System has always acceded to requests for any President to address the U.S. It is not 'possible or wise for broadcasting to adopt a mathematical formula of fairness.' Similar demand to editors of newspapers would be almost unanimously rejected. 'We are not under the domination of this administration and we have never been under the domination of any other . . . our record is proof enough.' After President's address we shall be glad to grant Republicans time for reply 'as we believe befits the circumstances.' Columbia 'cannot accept the principle that all broadcast activities of the Government of the United States or its spokesmen are in the nature of political activities and are to be mathematically balanced by similar broadcasts at a similar time by a political party in opposition to the party to which Mr. Roosevelt belongs! . . . I hope I have made it clear to you

* Such correspondence is, of course, never made public in the case of our own B.B.C. It is understood that members of the B.B.C. staff may not write about the B.B.C. for two years after leaving it.

† "Political Broadcasts": A Series of Letters exchanged between the Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., and the Republican National Committee. (C.B.S. Inc., 485 Madison Avenue, New York City.)

that we distinguish between the President of the United States and Franklin D. Roosevelt as a candidate for political office.'

FLETCHER to PALEY, 4th Jan.

Reminds Paley of Columbia Vice-President's reply to director of Republican radio division, of 27th Dec., outlining Columbia policy under two heads of (1) not selling time till after conventions, and (2) not allowing dramatisation. 'As the Republican National Committee's plans for the use of radio are completed and time is an essence, I would appreciate your advising me by return mail that the policies outlined in Mr. Klauber's letter are the policies of the Columbia Broadcasting System.'

PALEY to FLETCHER, 8th Jan.

'This is to advise you in reply to your letter of January 4th that Mr. Edward Klauber, First Vice-President of this Company, set forth correctly to you the policies of the Columbia Broadcasting System. . . . I will tell you more completely' some of our guiding principles.

We are required under Communications Act of 1934 to operate as a public convenience. In trying to do this, we sacrifice every year 'hundreds of thousands of dollars of revenue' and do not sell time to any organisation to do exactly what it pleases. 'If anything like programme balance is to be maintained . . . the broadcasting system rather than the user or would-be user must dictate programme policy . . . it is our fixed policy not to sell time for propaganda of any sort. When we think that the public is sufficiently interested in a subject suitable for discussion over the air so that propagandists of opposing sides should be heard, we allot the time without charge . . . it is difficult to define precisely what we mean by propaganda . . . and we rely upon common sense and the editorial judgment of those who operate it. What I mean in a general way, however, is this: We would not, for example, sell time to the public utilities holding companies to agitate against proposed legislation restricting or regulating their operations. We would and did give them time in which to argue against such proposed legislation just as we gave the advocates time to argue in favour of such legislation. On the other hand, if the public utilities wanted to buy time to advertise their goods and services—that is, to promote the use of gas and electricity—we would unhesitatingly sell them available time for such use.'

Therefore we will not now sell time 'to the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, or any other political organisation, until after the conventions. . . .'

FLETCHER to PALEY, 13th Jan.

I do not question right of Columbia to determine its own policies . . . . 'I cannot, however, free myself of the impression that the attitude you have taken is affected and perhaps involuntarily controlled by the political party in power which regulates the issuance of your licenses. . . . I believe your policy will leave in the minds of the American public the distinct impression that you are either exercising an unwarranted degree of censorship or that you fear punitive action by the Federal Communications Commission.' I am told that both the National Broadcasting Company and Columbia cleared the air of all programmes on the night of 3rd Jan. and 8th Jan. for the President to broadcast. 'I assume this was free time and the question arises, was this in the nature of a donation to a political party by the Radio Companies or by the Corporations sponsoring programmes which were displaced by the President's speeches? It seems to me that the services of the great radio chains should be as non-partisan and free from governmental domination as are great news services like the A.P., U.P., International News, etc., and give both sides an absolutely equal break.'

Now about dramatisation: Republicans hoped 'before the heat and fury of the political campaign' to 'take advantage now of modern radio technique to convey our message . . . the statement . . . that "appeals to the electorate should be intellectual and not based on emotion, passion, or prejudice" seems almost funny in the light of the impassioned appeal to class prejudice made by the President in his Congressional broadcast on 3rd January. To my mind the use of what you are pleased to call your editorial judgment amounts in practice to censorship.' So long as dramatisations are represented by the announcer as dramatic sketches, there is no legitimate reason for refusing them.

'The two great systems enjoy under the ninety day licence system imposed by the Federal Communications Commission a precarious lease of the great theatre of the air . . . you decline to open the doors of this theatre to those in opposition to the policies of the administration unless your editorial judgment approves the programme to be presented. . . . In view of the public interest in this question of the freedom of the air, I am giving a copy of this letter to the Press.'

PALEY to FLETCHER, 13th Jan.

'You are under a misapprehension in all of your assumptions that the Federal Communications Commission could—even if it would—take punitive action against us for political reasons or that we live in fear of this administration or any other . . . there is nothing in the Federal Communications law which would allow the Commission to act from partisan political motives, and if it did so act its judgments would very promptly be reversed by the Federal courts. Moreover, if this company were subject to such domination by any political party as is implied by you, the American people would be served so shabbily that I should lose all interest in the conduct of this business. . . .

'You have never asked us for free facilities and been refused. What you did ask was for us to assume in advance that an address by the President of the United States to the people of America and their Congress was a political speech, and to set aside in advance . . . comparable time for a Republican answer . . . we made plain to you and now repeat to you that we shall distinguish between the President as President and Franklin D. Roosevelt as a candidate for office.' Since the Presidential message, we have asked you to state your desires for time and you have failed to do so . . . you cannot with justice accuse us of censorship nor should you assail our editorial judgment unless and until you are prepared to cite specific instances . . . these are the facts with regard to our political broadcasts in recent months:

'From 2nd October to 11th January, the Columbia Broadcasting System presented 16 political addresses by Republican spokesmen and 13 by Democratic spokesmen. During this time Columbia made several offers to the Republican party of its facilities for their speakers which were not utilised, notably on 16th December for yourself to summarise results of the National Republican Committee meeting in Washington. From 14th January to 29th January of this year, Columbia has scheduled four addresses by Republican spokesmen and three by Democratic spokesmen. We have, besides, frequently given time to opponents of the President within the Democratic party, to speakers nominated by the Liberty League and many other organisations in general disagreement with the President's policies.

'I am glad to answer your question as to whether or not the time we allotted for the President's speech was a donation to a political party. It certainly was not. It was a donation to the American people. It has always been our policy to make time available for the President of the United States when he wished to address the nation. We followed this policy through two Republican administrations and we follow it now.'

Completely agree that, like press associations, we should give both sides absolutely equal break . . . at the same time I assure you no reputable or responsible press association is run on a mathematical basis under which so many words on a given day are allotted to each political party. The press association follows the breaks of the news and the shifting of public interest from issue to issue. We would not be doing anything but an automaton's job if we tried to run broadcasting otherwise.

No quarrel with your wanting to present issues 'before heat and fury' of campaigning, we will allow ample time but 'we must persist in our refusal to take money for it.' Disagree with you 'flatly' that dramatisations are unobjectionable if so tagged. We do not close doors of 'the great theatre of the air. . . . We refuse to accept money for opening it.'

'I repeat to you . . . we intend . . . to discharge our responsibilities as honestly and as largely in the public interest of good broadcasting as we know how.'

* * *

Pondering this thirteen-hundred word onslaught on the morning of 14th January, the day on which his own party was to make its first speech in the new series given by courtesy of the Columbia System, Mr. Fletcher must have decided to throw in the sponge for the Republicans. At any rate he retired into a cryptic dignity and hopefully replied that day:

'I think our correspondence plants the issue squarely before the American people and I am willing to leave it to their calm and unbiassed judgment whether or not, on the record thus made, your System is not exercising censorship of the air.

'One point in your letter. You say you asked us to state our desires for time and we failed to do so. . . . I felt this concession so unsatisfactory and hedged about that I did not immediately ask your System for time.

'However,' magnanimously concludes Mr. Fletcher in a final paragraph that suggests there had been no correspondence at all, no violent disturbance of the ether, 'in the course of the political campaign, which was opened by the President's Congressional broadcast, I shall hope that Republican speakers will receive comparable time at equally desirable hours over comparable stations, as may be granted to the spokesmen of the party in power. You will receive requests to this effect from time to time.'

* * *

The judgment of this issue may be left, too, to the calm and possibly even more unbiassed consideration of the reader. As a 'discussion' between two types of official mind it is interesting, as a fight between two men in kid gloves it is at least amusing, as a precedent in political broadcasting it is historical.

Henry Pratber Fletcher was born sixty-three years ago in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, where he lives to-day. He was educated at Chambersburg (Pa.) Academy, is an LL.D. of the University of Chile, of Dickinson and Lafayette. He was admitted to the bar in 1894, became an official reporter in a Pennsylvania district for seven years. In 1898 he enlisted in 'Teddy' Roosevelt's Rough Riders and served as a first lieutenant in the Philippines between 1899 and 1901. He has been Secretary to the American Legations in China and Portugal, and Ambassador Extraordinary to Chile, Mexico, Belgium and Italy, which last he resigned in 1929.

William Samuel Paley's history is less imposing, if only because he is already only thirty-five. He was born in Chicago and graduated from the Western Military Academy at Alton, Ill., in 1918. Till 1922, he was a student at the universities of Chicago and then Pennsylvania. For seven years he managed the production and advertising for a cigar company. He became President of the Columbia Broadcasting System in 1928 and has remained so since. He controls broadcasting systems in Minneapolis, Chicago, Cincinnati, Washington, Charlotte (N.C.), Atlantic City, and St. Louis.

Many who have few hopes that the Companies' lease of the air can be made more permanent can take comfort from reflecting that, after this correspondence, William Paley's personal lease of 'the great theatre of the air' is likely to become appreciably less precarious.

Radio should exploit its gift for Drama

What can the B.B.C. offer us in the way of radio-dramatic entertainment which is neither actuality nor documentary?

Listen this month to *The Silver Cord* for one example. Here is a good stage play of the second class, adapted for broadcasting. Val Gielgud handles it, so the production is likely to be sensitive, well balanced and lucid. An excellent cast includes Edna Best and Madge Titheradge.

Then listen, later on, to *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, an adapted novel which you may well find trite, obvious, sentimental. But you will, I would swear, enjoy it more than *The Silver Cord* because, in form, it is so much better suited to radio treatment. It grips the attention instead of demanding an effort of attention.

Why? Because it has a single important character moving through a series of events; because these events take place in chronological order and because they are presented with absolute simplicity. It exploits, in fact, radio's gift for sheer story telling.

It is a serious criticism of the B.B.C. that this gift is so rarely used. Even *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, is a revival. Since it was first given, a year ago, only one production, *The Nightingale*, has surpassed it in its own style. Nothing else has come near to being its equal.

Were these successes accidental? Why, after a year's experience in a rapidly developing art, have they not been improved upon? G. W. G.

Russians harness Television to Industry

Television's first application to industry may take the form of controlling the movement of shipping on the new Moscow-Volga canal, the great Soviet waterway which will link Moscow with the Caspian, Baltic and White Seas.

The designers are considering the installation of televisors at key points along the canal, with central reception at the main control-point at Dmitrov, 60 kilometres west of Moscow. In this way the engineers in charge will be able to watch the progress of ships and order the opening and closing of the various sluices accordingly.

Should television not be in a sufficiently advanced state when the canal is opened in October 1937, an alternative plan has been drawn up for watching ships' movements by a system of invisible rays playing on to photo-electric cells across the water. A ship entering the field of the ray cuts off the input to the photo-electric cell on the opposite bank, and so indicates its position to the control-point. The system is similar to that used for certain types of burglar-alarms and for "blind landing" at airports.

Besides giving Moscow access to three seas, the new canal will ensure to the city an ample water supply for domestic and industrial needs. Its construction, which was begun in 1932, involves the building of ten sluices and eleven dams. Seven thousand workers are being trained as maintenance engineers.

B.B.C. Events of the Month

Sunday, July 5, 10.15 p.m.: Erasmus Programme (Felton) NATIONAL.

Monday, July 6, 8 p.m.: "Vice Versa" (Producer, Barbara Burnham) NATIONAL.

Wednesday, July 8, 8.30 p.m.: Stanelli's Bachelor Party Anniversary (Producer, A. W. Hanson). REGIONAL.

Thursday, July 9, 11.40 p.m.: Reading. Facts and Lay Figures from Defoe. REGIONAL.

Friday, July 10, 8.15 p.m.: Polish concert from Cracow (Conductor, Fitelberg). REGIONAL.

Saturday, July 11, 4.25 p.m.: A Round of Sport—A.A.A. Championships, King's Cup Air Race, Eton and Harrow match. NATIONAL.

Sunday, July 12, 9 p.m.: Much Ado About Nothing—Stratford Company (Birmingham). NATIONAL.

Monday, July 13, 8 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra (Conductor, Constant Lambert). NATIONAL.

Wednesday, July 15, 8 p.m.: B.B.C. Midland Orchestra—Concert of Modern Composers. NATIONAL.

Thursday, July 16, 8 p.m.: The Ghost Train (Producer, H. Rose). REGIONAL.

Thursday, July 16, 9 p.m.: Violin Recital—Arthur Catterall. NATIONAL.

Saturday, July 18, 3.15 p.m.: Davis Cup Inter-Zone Final. Commentary. NATIONAL.

Sunday, July 19, 4 p.m.: Lohengrin Act I, from Bayreuth. REGIONAL.

Sunday, July 19, 5.50 p.m.: Lohengrin Act II, from Bayreuth. NATIONAL.

Monday, July 20, 9 p.m.: Variety Feature. Sydney Howard. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, July 22, 8 p.m.: Harry Hopeful in Teesdale. MANCHESTER.

Thursday, July 23, 10.20 p.m.: Chamber Music. Maurice Cole Trio. NATIONAL.

Friday, July 24, 10 p.m.: Down to the Sea in Ships (first of a series). Introduction by Wynn Thomas. NATIONAL.

Saturday, July 25, 1.25 p.m.: Test Match Commentary. NATIONAL.

Sunday, July 26, 9.30 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra. Programme of Early Instrumental and Vocal Music. REGIONAL.

Monday, July 27, 12 noon: Test Match Commentary from Old Trafford. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, July 28, 8 p.m.: Dumbarton Castle—feature programme. SCOTTISH REGIONAL.

Tuesday, July 28, 8.40 p.m.: "The Three Friends" (Producer, Gielgud). NATIONAL.

Thursday, July 30, 8 p.m.: Talk. Ancient Monuments. Rt. Hon. W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore. NATIONAL.

Friday, July 31, 8.30 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra (Conductor, Albert Coates). REGIONAL.

Hollywood ready for Television

By our New York correspondent.

Although the development of television on a nation-wide scale is not anticipated before 1937 or 1938, Hollywood is more than ready to meet any such development, according to the scientific committee for the Research Council of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Hollywood's "psychological preparedness" for television, the committee reports, is in marked contrast to the costly "scepticism" which greeted the change from silent to sound pictures.

"The cost of development up to this point may be measured in millions of dollars," the committee pointed out. "Before there is any possibility of nation-wide exploitation, hundreds of millions of dollars must be expended for numerous transmitting stations of limited range, connecting cables of new design, and receivers. None of these things can be obtained overnight.

"There is a possibility of such a development starting in 1937, or more probably in 1938. It should be noted that its scope, as far as we can prevision it, is limited to home entertainment purposes in urban areas."

A new transmitting station in New York will supply about 150 receivers to selected observers, each receiver costing, according to their estimate, "probably several thousand dollars."

The committee, composed of outstanding film technicians, with Carl Dreher as chairman, said that the film industry had "technically trained personnel, capable of following the progress of television and giving notice of impending developments."

German Radio Expert Scores British Film

Karol Rathaus, German composer of the music for *Amok* and *The Brothers Karamazov*, has recently completed the music of the Anna Sten film *A Woman Alone*.

In Germany Rathaus is famous as an expert on the broadcasting of music. His experience in this field has made him believe that microphone technique is still in its infancy. In his book, "Music in Front of the Microphone," he states that the microphone cannot yet be used as a creative instrument partly because its technical capabilities are still primitive, and partly because listening audiences, accustomed to straight reproduction, cannot be rushed into a new conception of music. He compares the present glut of concert music over the microphone to the early use of the camera to imitate painting.

In collaboration with Kurt Weill and Brecht, Rathaus made a successful attempt to solve the problem of respiration in German singing by a system of pronunciation akin to everyday speech. The method has been applied to broadcast performances of Wagner in Germany.

MUSIC AND FILM

BY MAURICE JAUBERT

Maurice Jaubert is a native of the South of France, and a well-known composer in his own country—especially in Paris. His serious compositions have not yet been heard in London.

His first film work was the music for Wavrin's documentary *Pays du Scalp*—1929–30. Since then he has worked with Cavalcanti, Vigo and Clair. His last job was in Litvak's *La Vie Parisienne*. He is in his early thirties.

The musical film paradoxically enough needs only a passing reference, as it does not raise any important problems. In this case the music is in control, whether it exists before the film is shot (e.g. *The Unfinished Symphony*) or when it is specially composed (e.g. *Forty-second Street*).

In the silent days, the inevitable musical accompaniment showed how the visuals could be strengthened when their own internal rhythm was underlined and accentuated by the music. When sound came in, producers were too timid to do anything but carry on this tradition.

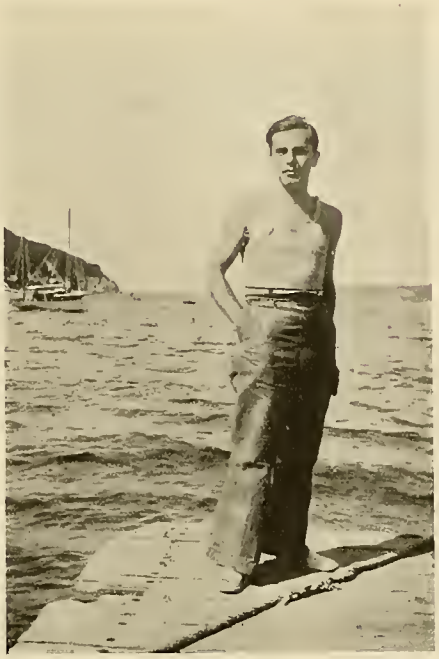
At best they demand very little of music. They use it to fill up blanks in the sound track, either when the original sound is too weak, or when the director has failed to get effective noises for a particular sequence. But more generally, music is chiefly used to *comment* on the action. For a tragic scene, emphasis on the horns or trombones accentuates the gloom. For sentiment, a solo violin, and so on.

In *The Lost Patrol*—otherwise an admirable film—the director was apparently alarmed by the silence of the desert in which the story was laid. He might well have realised the dramatic possibilities of silence, but instead he assaulted the ear—without a moment's pause—with a gratuitous orchestral accompaniment which nearly destroyed the reality of the visuals.

Another attitude was well illustrated in *The Informer* where music was used to imitate the noise of coins falling and even the gurgling of beer in a man's throat.

This is not merely puerile, but a misconception of what music is, for it takes away its continuity and reduces it to the level of raw sound. But sometimes, just as the novelist interrupts his straight story with personal digressions, or descriptions of his character's feelings, so also the director escapes from the usual rut and adds poetic or documentary elements which give his film an added character. In such cases music has a chance. The very fact of its appearance acts as a warning to the audience that the mood of the film is being temporarily changed. This change of balance should be carefully worked out by the director. In some cases music can be used for shock purposes, for instance, a sudden orchestral fortissimo at a moment of crisis. In other cases it may creep in insidiously, evolving from some rhythmic noise like that of a train.

Unfortunately, most writers of music for films have already become enslaved by the usual requirements of producers, and have evolved a kind of film-music language, which combines the least suitable Wagnerian clichés with the smooth facility of imitation Debussy.



Maurice Jaubert

They should be reminded that we do not go to the films to hear music. We want music to give greater depth to our impressions of the visuals. We do not want it to explain the visuals, but to add to them *by differing from them*. In other words, it should not be *expressive*, in the sense of adding its quota to the sentiments expressed by the actors or the director, but *decorative* in the sense of adding its own design to that proper to the screen.

Finally, film-music must in nature be recorded, so that, however perfect the means of recording, the composer should never forget the special qualities of the microphone or the possibilities of re-recording and the cutting bench.

To give a personal example, in Vigo's *Zero de Conduite* I had to write music to a procession of small boys by night, the occasion being a dormitory rebellion. The sequence in itself was highly fantastic and shot in slow motion. In order to follow out this atmosphere of unreality, I recorded my music and then reversed the sound track. The effect of running it backwards was to retain the broad outline of the melody, but as each single note was heard backwards an atmosphere of strangeness was achieved.

Music, like direction, set-design and cutting, must do its bit to bring clarity, logic and especially truth to the development of any film. If it can quietly add an extra element of poetry, so much the better.

The Story of a Blues Pianist

John Goldman contributes this special article to mark the issue in England of the record of the classic, "Honky-Tonk Train Blues," by the American negro pianist, Meade Lux Lewis.

Some five years ago, in a small town of a southern State, John Hammond stopped in at a second-hand goods store on one of his rounds, searching for talent. Following his custom, he searched through the pile of old records stacked in a corner. He pulled out several and played them over. One was so old and so scratched that unless you listened carefully you could not hear much of what was being played. The record was "Honky-Tonk Train Blues," played by Meade Lux Lewis, a pianist he had never heard of before.

He took the record home, and the more he listened the more enthusiastic he became over what was, undoubtedly, one of the most original pieces of jazz ever recorded. He enquired about the pianist, but no one had ever heard of him.

That was five years ago. Since then he asked every musician he ever met for information. But he never received the slightest indication that the man had ever existed. He concluded that Lewis was dead, or was one of the thousands of illiterate and unknown negroes who play and are eternally lost in the gin-mills of American cities.

Last October Hammond was in Chicago looking for talent, this time for the new British Parlophone series. Hearing of a promising bassist playing at a haunt of the name of De Lisa, he went there to listen to him. He turned out to be as good as Hammond had hoped, an eighteen-year-old negro named Israel Crosby. He is the bass player, by the way, in "Barrelhouse."

To get in touch with the orchestra, Hammond started talking to the pianist. He opened the conversation as he had five thousand others "Do you play 'Honky-Tonk Train Blues'? Do you know Meade Lux Lewis?" "Why man, Lux is my best friend!" exclaimed the pianist.

They searched for three days and eventually found him in a garage, washing a car. Hammond immediately swept him off to his hotel, questioning him all the time. He had composed "Honky-Tonk" twelve years before, but it had not caught on because it was too difficult for anyone else to play. He had not played it for a long time, but he could remember it.

At the hotel he sat down and played "Honky-Tonk" through. During the intervening years he had added two extra choruses, and he played even more faultlessly than on the original record. The poor man was amazed; he could not understand Hammond's excitement. No one had ever told him he was any good; besides, he explained, the type of music he played had long since gone out of fashion; people no longer cared for the Blues. For several hours that night he played one Blues after another.

A few days later he awoke to fame. One of the big New York evening newspapers splashed his fantastic story in headlines across the front page. To-day he is installed as a feature player in one of the well-known New York night resorts. He is engaged in making more records, and they will be Blues. Two have just reached this country: "Mr. Freddy Blues" and "I'm in the Mood for Love."

CHINESE FILMS FOR CHINA

中國電影在國內國外之情形

BY WINIFRED HOLMES

Lord Halifax has said ". . . after the World War . . . the Orient stopped admiring the white race; after Hollywood's efficient handiwork, they refuse to respect the white race." Now China makes its own films.

The Chinese Exhibition, the Eumorfopulous Collection, "Lady Precious Stream"—and now Chinese films! Peacefully, delightfully, the Chinese invasion continues. Popular music-hall artist, Lai Foun, head of the Six Lai Founs, has turned producer and started the Bijou Film Co. at Snodland, near Gravesend. He has already made a quota short for Columbia—"Chinese Cabaret"—and plans to start shooting on a full-length feature with a mixed Chinese and English cast this month.

S. I. Hsiung, author of "Lady Precious Stream," has written the film's story, in which Lai Foun, son of a wealthy Chinese family, comes to England for education. Hearing his father is ruined, he refuses to return to his country, and joins a circus where in time he not only makes good, but enough money to go home and re-establish the family fortunes.

Mr. Hsiung will write all the stories for the Bijou Film Co., whose plan to make Anglo-Chinese films is an interesting experiment. Chinese films are at present little known in the West. Paramount are about to release in America a recent success—"Tien lun," or "Family Relations," the story of a family of four generations—and banks on getting popularity for a purely Chinese production. There is no news to date of its release over here.

Another recent Shanghai production—"The Fishermen's Song"—has just swept Russia. A film of the hard struggle and raw passions of Chinese river-folk, it is reminiscent of "The Volga Boatmen." Popular Yen-yen Chen stars in it.

These two films show that China is not aping Hollywood, but draws upon her own rich sources of life, custom and locality for her screen productions. The Government encourages these modern sociological films. In fact it frowned upon the historical and legendary "cloak and sword" traditions which were used in the early stages of the industry. "The Western Chamber," a Ming drama of the 14th century, and "The Red Chamber," 17th century, were two such classical dramas made into films.

Also it exercises a strict censorship. Before shooting, all stories must be subjected to the Censor at Nanking, as well as the completed film later on. Indecency, opium smoking, Chinese people shown unfavourably, are banned. There is a ruling that all films must be made in the standard language—Mandarin. This is the case with Shanghai productions, but in the South some of the Cantonese producers disregard the law.

The Government is fully aware of the cinema's importance for propaganda purposes, and makes its own newsreels, as well as all propaganda and educational films.

In May of this year a new edict was passed by the South-West Political Council, to support the industry. At least 60 per cent of the films shown in Kwantung must be Chinese; production must be increased and quality improved.

So far the demand for native films is far ahead

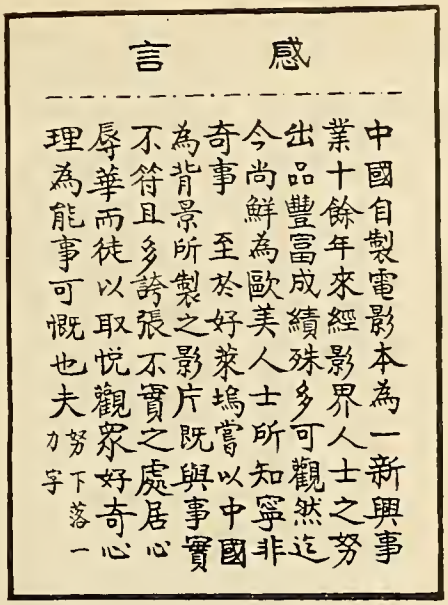
of the supply. American movies in the silent days were very popular, but the talkies knocked the bottom out of the market. The Chinese industry was born in the early nineteen-twenties, but owing to lack of capital, and dialect and distribution difficulties, its growth has been slow. The starvation level of millions of peasants of the interior, and their hopeless illiteracy, has prevented the cinema becoming a national habit in spite of its great popularity in the cities. Last year there were 276 cinemas in the whole of China including Manchuria. These cinemas are situated in 68 towns and cities only. 157 have sound equipment. At the most 100 Chinese films are made per annum, and until there are more cinemas this number is unlikely to be increased.

The drawbacks to new cinemas being built are lack of capital and electric current. The latter is available in a few localities only. Occasionally generating plants are installed—expensive and seldom satisfactory. "The People's Tribune" says that "considerations of order and security" largely affect this matter. "Before investing their money in constructing and equipping a cinema, people want to be assured of a return on their outlay, and feel reasonably certain that it will not be raided by bandits, or their profit cut to nothing by the imposition of some arbitrary tax. . . . There are many areas in which they cannot have this assurance."

China is not at present a united country—films might have an immense unifying and strengthening effect if only such economic obstacles could be overcome.

The history of the native industry is briefly this. In 1909 the first film company started up in China. It was an American organisation—the Asia Motion Picture Co.—and made two pictures—"The Empress Dowager" and "The Unfortunate Child." Four years later another American company was formed, using Chinese actors, but badly misrepresenting Chinese life. The Commercial Press in 1918 made scenarios for educational films and in 1921 the New Asia Co. and the Shanghai Co. were started. At that time the British-American Tobacco Co. tried through their Red Seal Film Co. to make and sell advertising films to the Chinese cinemas. Their "Story of the Willow Pattern Plate" had a good run in Shanghai in 1927 and was shown in England to the King and Queen. They provided a training-ground for Chinese producers, directors, actors and technicians.

The real start of the native industry was around 1923–4, when the purely Chinese companies of the Star Motion Picture Co. and the Unique Film Co., which flourish to-day, were inaugurated. During the next few years the industry made rapid growth, and many mushroom companies sprang up producing a picture



Translation of the above:

"The film business is really a new thing in China but our film people have tried their best to produce some good films. They have done it. Unfortunately this is so little known to Europeans and Americans.

"Most of the films made in Hollywood, choosing China as a background, do not really tell the true facts, but we know they only want to attract the curiosity of audiences."

on little capital, then going bankrupt. The Cinema Arts Corporation existed to take over unfinished pictures from defunct companies and

to complete them for showing. Shanghai is the main centre, but Hong Kong and Canton have their companies too. Studios are manned entirely by Chinese, only a few of whom have had Western training.

Films made are still mostly silent. The Star Co. makes 20 silent and 6–8 sound pictures a year. Mr. P. C. Chen is their ace director, and Miss Butterfly Wu their popular star. Their "Singing Peony" and "The Two Sisters" had record runs, and America paid 10,000 dollars for a copy of the latter. The Unique Film Co., responsible for about 20 pictures per annum, was the first to make a sound film in 1931. The United Photoplay Service ("Humanity," "City Mornings," "The Fishermen's Song") and Yih Hwa Co. ("Woman," best film of 1934) are two other important companies. All these companies own theatres and do their own distributing. They have a considerable overseas market in the Philippines, Siam, French Indo-China and the Malay States.

Chinese producers, unlike most, take their responsibility seriously. They tackle real problems of modern life, showing good and bad in the changing conditions of their country; the importance of stable family relations, and so forth. The story of "Humanity" is a case in point. It is a film about peasant life in the North-West, contrasting it with city life. A young man leaves wife, children, old parents, and goes off to the city. There, forgetting home ties, he marries a rich wife and plunges into the gaiety round him, dancing, playing poker, living luxuriously. One evening at a banquet he is asked to subscribe to a fund for the starving peasants of the North-West, but refuses at the instigation of his wife. Not long after she goes off with another man and leaves him penniless. Disillusioned, he returns to his old home to find his parents have died of famine. He is overcome with remorse, but his peasant wife takes him back and forgives him his neglect. Another version of the patient Griselda theme, so loved in the Orient.

Although Western films are still shown in big cities, they have lost prestige as well as popularity. Lord Halifax once said, ". . . after the World War . . . the Orient stopped admiring the white race; after Hollywood's efficient handiwork, they refuse to respect the white race."

Chinese much resent the way they are shown under villainous misapprehensions on the Western screen. Tong wars are unknown in China, they are purely American gangster affairs; opium was forced upon China and is not an overwhelming national vice; revenge by poison is not part of their scheme of things; finally, "a Chinese wearing Cantonese clothes and called Fu Manchu is as silly as a Hollander dressed in Spanish costume and called Von MacJones!"

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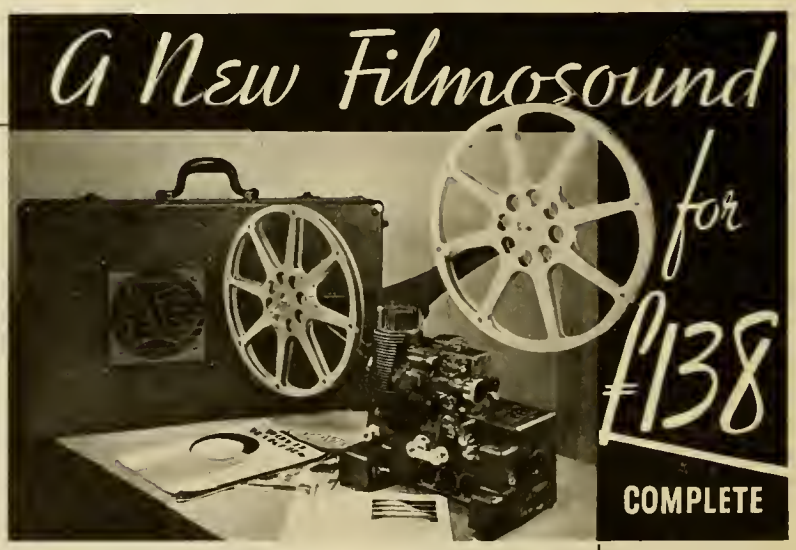

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PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS

Amateur Film in a Rut
says Paul Burnford

Paul Burnford, prize amateur film-maker, now a professional worker, gives advice to amateurs and makes some trenchant criticism.

The Amateur Film Maker has fallen into a rut. With the exception of a few rare cases there has hardly been a single example of original or creative work since the advent of sub-standard apparatus 12 years ago. While admitting that the standard of photography has steadily improved, it has only developed in exact ratio to the better stock and processing and is therefore of little credit to the film-maker himself.

Amateurs can be divided into four distinct classes: (*a*) the quasi-intellectuals with their inexhaustible supply of high-hatted words and phrases, who are always just going to accomplish something; (*b*) the makers of film plays, desirous of thrusting their physiognomies before a waiting world; (*c*) the fond parent with his records of little Oswald and the family, and (*d*) the realist. The latter term is used in a general sense, meaning the worker with a more serious approach to film making, using the movie for a purpose.

The amateur's supreme fault is his misunderstanding of the basic principles of construction. It matters little what type of subject is undertaken, but it must be simple and have scope for acquiring a knowledge of film construction. To fulfil the latter requirement it must have some thematic link throughout.

It is best for the realist to start on some very simple subject. Take any straightforward job of work, such as a man digging, and build a short film around it. Show how the human effort, assisted by the spade, enables the work to be accomplished. It all seems very simple, but requires considerable ingenuity. Digging is a scientific job—try and analyse it. Show the man's face with the sweat dripping from his brow, his concentration, the entry of the spade into the earth, and its turning action, the muscular effect of his arms, and stress the fact that after he has been labouring for a given time work has been accomplished. Try and preserve throughout a perfect sense of time and rhythm.

The aim should be to show the process in the minimum amount of footage. This entails not necessarily the elimination of the long shot, mid shot practice, but demands the keeping of these down to a minimum length. The tendency at first is usually to drag out the subject to an unnecessary length, a fault which with practice will be automatically reduced.

Cease envying the professional with his more elaborate equipment and holding this as an excuse for inferior film making. Give the amateur professional equipment with its intricacies and complications, and the results would be considerably worse than they are at present.

Do not be afraid to experiment and risk new ideas. Even if they do not at first materialise, they will help to give life to a branch of film making which has too long been dormant. Try various camera angles and set ups, and experiment in the cutting, but remember that in anything attempted there must be some subject and idea behind it.

Always preconceive what material will be required, and how it will take its place in the finished whole. If you should decide to shoot an object from a certain angle to add emphasis, stick to your original idea and do not deviate. Uncertainty always leads to broken continuity in the completed film.

As a final plea, get inside your subject, and do not hesitate to show up details. The personification of effort by showing the sweat on a person's brow throws the sequence into relief, and has a far more telling and dramatic significance than all the haphazard shooting in the world.

WE HOPE THAT

We shall soon see the Toeplitz-Chevalier *Beloved Vagabond.*

Romeo and Juliet will do better than *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

The craze for film musical-comedies will reach saturation point at an early date.

The Trade will soon set about the formation of a central statistical bureau.

Everyone will be quite satisfied with their Television sets.

The August issue of "World Film News" will include an article on the Home Libraries and their fund of first-rate films.

Book Reviews

FILM MUSIC by Kurt London (Faber & Faber. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

It was about time for someone to write a book on this subject, and if Dr. London does not go very deep into the subject, he does at least give a very complete résumé of the relations between Music and Films during the past forty years.

There is a particularly good chapter on the system of film music compiled by Becce for cinema orchestras in the old silent days. This was the *Kinothak*, which divided music under such heads as "Uncanny agitato," "Impending doom," "Disturbed Masses; Tumult," "Passionate excitement" and so on.

Dr. Kurt London is 37 years old. He was well known in Germany for his film work before the Hitler regime. He edited "Der Film," and subsequently established a microphone institute for sound film, radio and gramophone recording. He is also a composer.

In regard to the modern sound film, Dr. London very rightly takes composers to task for sticking to the large symphony orchestra instead of developing a technique suitable not only for the microphone but also for the demands of film expression.

The chapters on modern composers of film music are illustrated with excerpts from typical scores. It is very interesting to compare the rigid economy of Walter Leigh's *Song of Ceylon* music with the elaboration of Bliss's score for *Things to Come.*

If you are interested in the sound film, you had better get this book. S. A. B.

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A comprehensive guide to all aspects of photography. Designed for amateurs it covers everything the beginner wants to know in clear everyday English. There is a welcome absence of scientific jargon with which the older school embarrass their work. It is a pity that in so excellent a book the photographs could not have been better reproduced.

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STRAND MARCHES ON

1935

For All Eternity
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Taking the Plunge
(Donald Taylor)

The Key to Scotland
(Marion Grierson)

Citizens of the Future
(Donald Taylor)
In association with G. B. Instructional.

Heart of an Empire
(Marion Grierson)

Private Life of Mr. Therm
(Donald Taylor)

Beside the Seaside
(Marion Grierson)

Sixpenny Telegrams
(Donald Taylor)

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1936

On the Road to Work (Edgar Anstey) A Film about the Ministry of Labour Training and Instructional Centres.

Work Waits for You (Alex Shaw) A Film about Juvenile Transference Schemes.

NOW IN PRODUCTION

Preface to Life **(Alex Shaw) A Film of Books, Writers and Publishers.**

The Royal Road **(J. B. Holmes) A Film about Transport and Railway Electrification.**

The Roof of the World **(R. Keene and P. Burnford) A Film of what happens on the Roof Tops of London.**

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Church and Film

THE MOST IMPORTANT event of the month is the remarkable decision of the Scottish churches reported by the Rev. George Carstairs, Editor of *Life and Work*. The traditions of religion in Scotland seemed altogether against acceptance of the film as an instrument in church work. As it has turned out these traditions have given a character and precision to the church's film approach which Sassenach churches should envy. No film in church services—a hard drive for films which will promote the social services: that is the policy outlined.

Public relations officers of Government departments and the big national organisations will welcome this decision. Sooner or later it means two or three thousand church halls in Scotland open to films which promote one or other of the public interests. The movement grows. In a few years' time there will be many thousands of halls open in this way. There will be the halls of the churches, of the educational groups, of the business clubs, the social organisations. This represents a vast opportunity for educational film services which have something to say and *something to give* to the community.

* * *

Gas Sponsors Diet Film

MOST INTERESTING of the production announcements is from the Gas people. They have begun production on a film dealing with the national diet, based on the investigations recently reported by Sir John Orr in *Diet and the National Income*. This is great going.

Orr's *Diet and the National Income* and M'Gonigle's *Poverty and Public Health* cover one of the most important themes in the national life to-day. Widespread ill-health and *un*-health derive from malnutrition—from the choice of wrong food and from incomes too low to purchase the necessary protective vitamins and minerals which are contained in milk, dairy produce, vegetables, fruit, etc.

When Orr's report appeared, the newspapers made a front page sensation of it. *Daily Worker* headlines announced that half the population of Britain was starving; the *Morning Post* announced that half the population, on the other hand, was overeating. Between these two extremes, science and the medical profession are agreed, after long years of research, that a new and revolutionary light has been shed on the maintenance of health and the prevention of disease.

It is very brilliant of the Gas people to collar this subject. Who more interested in food, cookery and the preservation of food than they? They will, incidentally, be doing a great service in publicising the question and the public must quickly recognise it.

S. C. Leslie, Publicity Officer of the Gas, Light and Coke Co., is responsible. He recently succeeded A. P. Ryan, who associated gas and the public service for the first time in film, with last year's *Housing Problems* and *Dinner Hour*. Diet is a more dramatic step in a great public relations policy.

* * *

Strand Makes Book Subject

THE BOOK COUNCIL has retained the Taylor-Rotha outfit (Strand Films) for a film which will encourage reading. This book film will be called *Preface to Life*, and the film will be of great interest to literary societies. The theme is that books are 'the way of experience.' Somerset Maugham, John Masefield, Louis Golding, Julian Huxley, Rebecca West and Virginia Woolf, among others, contribute to the film. They will describe the many traditions of English literature and indicate what part books are playing and may yet play in the modern life.

Strand Films are strong in directors. D. F. Taylor, managing director, was responsible for *So this is Lancashire*, *Spring Comes to England*, and *Citizens of the Future*. Rotha, chief of production, has directed with Bruce Woolfe some of the most outstanding documentary successes, including *Shipyard* and *The Face of Britain*. His recent transport film, *Death on the Road*, is now breaking circulation records for documentary films and has gone to over a thousand theatres. Shaw, who is directing the book film, made some fine travel films last year for the Orient Line and has recently completed a film on labour camps for the Ministry of Labour. A new director for Strand is J. B. Holmes, one of the best of the Bruce Woolfe graduates.

Scottish Church Founds Film Guild

ON THE 21st of May there was instituted in Edinburgh a Scottish Churches Film Guild. It is an inter-denominational body, and its object is described in the constitution in terms so general as to indicate that its first task will be the shaping of a policy. "The purpose of the Guild," we read, "shall be to encourage the use of the film in the service of the Church, to advise as to the use of the film for religious purposes, and to assist congregations and religious bodies by means of the production and supply of suitable films."

The wording shows considerable caution, and caution is likely to characterise the Guild's first tentative efforts. Any rash attempt to "put the Gospel on the screen" would most probably result in the vulgarising of things sacred. The possibilities of the film in relation to religion have yet to be explored. But at least there is ample scope—through films on urgent social questions of the hour, films illustrative of the Church's own work, and, it may be, films showing the results of Christian principles in human life—of presenting in a new and telling way many of the things which the Church has at heart.

Of course, everything will depend on what may be regarded as "suitable films." There is no sphere in which there is greater danger of dropping into sentimentality than that of religion, and a sentimental religious film would be a horror and a desecration. The Guild aims at securing films, not only of high technical merit, but worthy in subject and of educative value.

Meantime there is much to be done in creating a demand throughout the country. There are thousands of church halls which could be used for purposes of exhibition. If the use of the film should become a normal part of Church activity there will be no lack of circulation, and consequently the problem of production should not prove insuperable.

Incidentally, one hopes that, if through the efforts of the Guild the film becomes an asset to the Church, at the same time the Church may be lending its aid to those in the film industry who are striving, especially through the production of good documentary films, to raise the cinema from a mere form of entertainment to what it ought to be—one of the most powerful educative forces of our day.

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JIMMY ROGERS

JIMMY ROGERS has grown up with the film industry, and his family was connected with the theatrical profession for generations. The Middletons, William Middleton, originator of the famous Middleton Marionettes, and Miss Millie Middleton, the toe dancer, and the Terry family are all branches of the family tree. His grandfather was responsible for the old-time transformation scenes at Drury Lane and Sadler's Wells. His father painted the pictures for Poole's Myrioramas, which were established in 1837—a kind of pictorial review of important world events.

One day Mr. Poole's son, who succeeded his father, brought to the studio a new invention—a cinematograph camera that could hold about fifty feet of film, and from that day motion pictures were included in Poole's programmes.

While still in his teens Jimmy became Studio Manager and Art Director for Windsor Films, later working with Kineto, Barker's and Kinemacolor. It was with the latter company that he achieved his ambition and learnt to use a ciné camera.

After the war he shot his first picture, *The Bridal Chair*, for G. B. Samuelson. He travelled to Egypt, Palestine and Syria on French productions. On returning to France he met Alberto Cavalcanti and together they made the first European documentary film, the famous *Rien que les Heures*. Of his meeting with Cavalcanti, Rogers says—"Here at last was someone who realised that a cameraman was an artist whose creative work was important to the success of the film and not, as was the general belief in those days, just a mere man to turn a handle."

His association with Cavalcanti continued for some time—on *Yvette*, *Le Train sans Yeux*, *La P'tite Lilie*, and *En Rade*. The latter was completely made in black-and-white. Previously it had always been considered necessary to use tinted stock. "I can recall many cases," says Rogers, "when a director would not wait for the sun to shine to light his set but instead, shoot it, tint it, and call it night!"

After three years in France, Rogers got homesick and came back to England, shooting several films for B.I.P., B. and D., and others. Then abroad again. He has worked in pretty nearly every country—West and North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Austria, Switzerland and Ceylon.

He likes travelling and meeting the inhabitants of other countries as they really are, and not as the tourist sees them. "I have always found everybody everywhere eager to help," he says," and have made many good friends during my travels."

And if you are ever near Elstree, where he lives, drop in some time and see the collection of curios he has gathered from all over the world.

Revivalists enter Propaganda Field

The Oxford Group — go-getting, revivalist religious group—have made a film, *Bridgebuilders*. It describes a recent house party in Denmark which thousands of people from all over the world attended. The film mostly consists of shots of different kinds of people going about in groups and looking happy, but contains good stuff taken indoors of Frank Buchman, leader and inspirer of the movement, addressing the assembly.

Eric Parfit, who was producer, claims to have had no previous experience, though there are signs of technical knowledge not usually commanded by amateurs. One suspects a certain amount of professionalism somewhere.

For finance, the producers just went ahead and money turned up. This is, of course, in line with Oxford Group practice, and they evidently have a pull over the ordinary realist director who has to rely on the tougher generosity of publicity departments.

Confidence that when the spirit moves one to start filming the money will come along, and deliberate lack of set plans may be good finance; but such methods make bad scripts. Next time the groupists start filming we recommend them to stick to their principles of raising the wind (they seem good) but to modify them when it comes to shooting. Clearer ideas, detailed scripts, organised production next time, please.

All the same the film is a great deal better than many similar efforts. It gets along, but the theme is a bit confused. The title refers to a bridge being built in Denmark. The Oxford Group, the film tries to say, is like a bridge between people and people (or between people and God). But all it succeeds in putting across is that a lot of people went to Denmark which is a country where they are building a bridge.

The producer dwells lovingly on shots of the bridge half covered by boards carrying the name of the builder. The finger of Dorman Long reaches far.

Bridgebuilders is for distribution to the theatres and fifteen thousand groupists, it is claimed, have already written to their local cinema managers asking them to book it. A. E.

Novelist directs real-life film

Arnot Robertson, author of *Ordinary Families* and *Four Frightened People*—the latter was filmed by de Mille—follows up her earlier experiments with a short billed as *Slices of Life No.* 1. The title is *Low Water*.

Idea is good. A down-and-out on the docks, weak with hunger, gets an unexpected job as a barge hand. The story tells simply of his efforts to run the barge for one day without cracking up under the eyes of a grim and taciturn captain.

He succeeds in getting through, and is given a permanent job.

It is difficult to put across what is virtually a one-man show on the part of the deck-hand, and the results tend occasionally to amateurishness.

The sound is well-planned as a soliloquy representing the man's thoughts. Unfortunately the recording was out of hand of the director; there are no changes of level or of intonation, and the whole film is backed by singularly unimpressive music. In future the director should control her own sound score.

The photography by H. E. Turner, husband of the director, is very good. B. W.

* * *

The story of the Shetland Islanders will be told by Michael Powell in a film called *Edge of the World*. The Joe Rock unit has just left for Foula, where a camp has been specially constructed for them. An expedition steamer has also been fitted out for them at Sunderland. Only local characters and talent will be used, and expert cliff men will take part in the film.

The crux of the story is a gathering up of circumstances and conditions which may force the Islanders to leave their homes and start a new life on the mainland. This is an authentic situation which has arisen more than once in the Islands' story.

Emperor of Leicester Square

Charles Raymond, former circus man, now manager of the Empire Theatre, reveals the organisation of a big West End cinema. His chief-of-staff, head projectionist and chief engineer explain their jobs to "World Film News."

"HERE'S A LITTLE LADY who pets, fondles and caresses poisonous and venomous reptiles as if she was a mother with a baby in her arms." Charles Raymond speaking back in 1917 as freak-show manager and ballyhoo man for an American circus. Raymond is now manager of the Empire, Leicester Square, and sits at a flower-decked desk, the red and orange neons for the current picture gleaming through his window.

Page boy, actor, publicity man, radio announcer, lecturer before the silent screen and assistant to the pioneer mystic Anna Eva Fay. He worked audiences in her mind-reading act. On special campaigns he was studio contact for the Will Hay's office; he pioneered South Africa

Charles Raymond

for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and has been their faithful servant for ten years.

Charles Raymond has brought American efficiency to the running of the West End's largest cinema. His staff numbers over one hundred and he makes no allowances for hitches in the organisation. There are no hitches. Through his chief-of-staff, Fred G. Fuller, he controls a uniformed gang of forty-five. These are the men who address you politely, who show you to your seat or remove you gently from the luxuriance of the *loge* which you have not booked to the front stall which is rightfully yours. These men are commanded to walk, never to run, to keep every hair in place and to wield a torch with the craftsmanship born of experience.

Mr. Fuller is a retired sergeant-major and though he requires utmost respect of his army to the "customers" he will not allow them to be treated as slaves. These men have self-respect. They have a valet to take care of their uniforms, they have clean linen twice a week and newly-cleaned uniforms once a month. They parade twice a day for cleanliness inspection and on Sunday there is the big parade and the roll call.

No militarism about this, just discipline and efficiency. But there is one thing Mr. Fred G. Fuller cannot control, and that is the growth of the 14-year-old youngsters he takes on as page-boys. It has become almost a menace to the smooth-running of the Empire. Only unremitting zeal can bridge the tell-tale gap between trouser and jacket.

The Empire management has pronounced women unsatisfactory as ushers. As a concession they are allowed in the tea-room, the box-office and the secretarial staff, but from the all-important job of usher they have been banned. The Empire is a man's show.

Twenty-five cleaners, six projectionists, eight electricians, four firemen, five cashiers, three ventilating engineers, four cloakroom maids—Raymond can reel them off for he knows the jobs of each member of his staff.

The Empire runs the longest hours in London, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. It pioneered cheap admission prices for morning shows and has Daimlers and Rolls Royces rolling up to catch the bargain performance. It possesses a full-size stage, back of the screen, but has never used it. Built by an American architect as a cinema in 1928, its policy has remained cinematic. Its longest run of all has been *Broadway Melody*, the original one, for 7½ weeks; its second longest, *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Other than these, it has run three and three only for as long as four weeks. These were *Queen Christina*, *Trader Horn* and *Tale of Two Cities*. Two of the five were in 1936. Shows start on Friday and by Monday Sam Eckman (head of M.G.M. British) and Charles Raymond know whether the film will stay for a longer run. Takings of £10,000 a week are common, £13,000 not unknown.

Stanley Perry is the chief projectionist and he has a staff of six men, each of whom is not only a projectionist but a sound engineer. Sound is relayed into the projection box and is to a certain extent controlled by the men at the machines. But the finer touches are given by volume control from the theatre itself. Perry is a believer in the human touch and it is his job to study the sound projection at trade shows and rehearsals so that he knows each film intimately. He cues the finer points at the actual performance of each show. As a musician submits the reading of a score, so Perry has a sound reading for each film. Mechanical accuracy is not wanted. It is the art of the showman to supply the human touch.

Stanley Perry is president of the Guild of Projectionists, and is something of a veteran in the projection business, as he started with films in 1912. He saw the beginning of sound pictures at the Empire and has been on its staff since the theatre was opened in 1928.

The Empire has a peculiarity which Mr. Perry believes is shared by very few theatres on this or the other side of the Atlantic. It changes its screen once every month—for the very good reason that tobacco smoke makes it dirty.

J. S. Morgan is engineer-in-chief at the Empire. He looks after everything mechanical except the projectors. Seats, gangways, upholstery (there are 3,600 chairs), fire precautions, lights, automatic weather control, all belong to his world.

Morgan is Welsh. He has been in the business since the war. He trained at Thornicroft's, the oil engine people, and then went to Duncan Watson, king of cinema and theatre lighting. In silent days he had to organise the lighting of a revivalist scene in Trafalgar Square (not on a set but the real place). Metro-Goldwyn were so pleased that they offered him a job on the spot, and he went to California as studio engineer.

He has led an exciting life. He was in charge of the *Ben Hur* outfit in Rome, and had to do everything from organising the transport to supplying aeroplanes to make a wind. He saw the Fascists deal summarily with a worker who slept in the engine room, dosing him with castor oil every day for a week. He went on location with Rex Ingram in Egypt. He had to transport a 200 h.p. Diesel into the desert. He dug a hole in the sand for the engine bed. No sooner dug than it filled up. Ingram passed from rage to dumb depression. Then Morgan's Arab assistant had an idea. He went to the nearest town miles away, and brought back a limewashing outfit and some plaster of paris. They dug the hole for the *n*th time. The Arab sprayed plaster of paris on the sides and over the surface of the desert for yards around.

Fred G. Fuller

Stanley Perry

That held the sand till the bedplate of the engine could be lowered into place.

Now Morgan feels it is time to settle down with his wife and two children. So he has taken the Empire under his wing. His speciality is the automatic weather. He will tell you that ten people give out a pound of moisture in an hour, and fifty people give out as much heat continuously as a steam radiator.

When the Empire ran community singing, there was almost a panic in the control room. The temperature of the theatre went up by leaps and bounds and the moisture content of the air increased surprisingly. The engineers thought something had failed, till they discovered what was happening and made adjustments.

Manufacturing weather is an art as well as a science. It demands judgment as well as enormous

Emperor of Leicester Square (contd.)

mechanical plant. The idea is to keep the air absolutely even in the amount of moisture it contains. This avoids strain on the lungs and makes for comfort. Morgan's job is to sell films. If comfort conditions are good, people will tolerate even an indifferent film; if they are bad, the best film will suffer. That is why it is worth Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's while to spend thousands of pounds on manufactured weather.

The volume of the Empire is a million cubic feet. That is difficult to imagine unless you remember that an average-sized sitting room contains about nine hundred and sixty cubic feet and would fit into the Empire nearly a thousand times.

The air in the Empire is changed completely six times an hour.

The important thing about air is not its temperature but the amount of moisture it contains. Too dry, and it affects your throat; too damp and it makes you heavy and oppressed. All the air for

J. S. Morgan

the Empire is brought in through streams of cold water. This takes out the dirt and since the air is cooled, most of the moisture as well. In the process the air becomes too dry and must be re-humidified to give it just the right amount of moisture and no more. Two hundred and fifty tons of ice are used every day for the cooling.

At home one opens the window at the top to let out the bad air, and the good air comes in at the bottom. Not so with modern manufactured weather. The fresh air is let in from the roof and it drives the stale air out through the doors. This keeps down dust and prevents draughts as draughts are caused by cool air blowing *into* a room. Air blows *out* at the Empire.

Morgan is in charge of seating and upholstery. People fidget continually when they are watching a picture and ashtrays are smashed by the hundred. The upholstery is changed completely every eighteen months and renewal goes on row by row all the year round.

I Spy a Pedestrian

THE NATIONAL PHYSICAL Laboratory is planning to use film to solve a topical street lighting problem. In many parts of the country the electric discharge lamp is replacing the filament lamp as a street lighting source. The new type of lamp differs from the old in the colour of the light it gives. The sodium lamp and the mercury vapour lamp—the two discharge lamps in common use—give respectively a yellow tinged light and a green tinged light. Colour may possibly affect the speed and clearness with which the motorist sees objects in his path.

The street lighting experts are transferring the problem from the street to the laboratory. They have prepared a film of a normally illuminated street from a series of stills in which appear pedestrians, cyclists, dogs and other common hazards. When the film is projected these objects will suddenly appear in selected positions on the road. The effect of a change in street lighting is achieved in a highly ingenious manner. It is done not by photographing another street but by changing the projector light source. First a tungsten lamp is used in the projector, then a mercury discharge lamp is used, then a sodium discharge lamp. In each case a series of observers will record by pressing a key the instant in the film when the pedestrians and dogs become visible to them.

The intensity of illumination will be the same for each type of lamp and any difference in the observers' reaction time between one kind of light and another will be due to the colour change alone.

The effect of glare from the street lamps on the screen cannot be accurately reproduced by film. It is proposed to test for glare by cutting holes in the screen at the points where the images of lamps appear and placing lights of the appropriate kind behind the screen so that they shine through the holes into the eyes of the observer.

The man behind 'Secrets of Nature'

Few people know that behind the G.B.I. *Secrets of Life* series, one man, working steadily and unobtrusively, has made these films possible.

It was during his schooldays at Lady Owen's, Islington, that Percy Smith decided upon his future career. A visit and lecture from a member of the Quekett Microscopical Club planted a lasting interest in his mind.

When he left school, he took a government job with the Board of Education: a very important one, he told *W.F.N.* impressively. It consisted of crossing out the "Sir or Madam" on printed forms. He spent all his spare time with a microscope, and in 1900, with an ache for a camera but with an empty pocket, he built one out of a flower-pot.

In 1902 he augmented his guinea a week salary by making lantern-slides of insects and plant-life. During this time he was giving lectures to scientific groups, and later, for a period, edited the *Quekett Microscopical Club Journal.*

About 1906, Percy Smith saw his first film, and at once spotted the possibilities of bringing nature to the screen. He approached the Board of Education, but could get no financial support.

Two years later his chance came when a gold-edged card arrived inviting him to a private film show. Charles Urban, of the Urban-Duncan Bioscope Science Series, had seen some of his lantern-slides and offered him a part-time job. With an old camera and an *f*/6 lens, he achieved results that got him the use of as many lenses as the company owned. He made a stunt film with bluebottles as the stars. They are so constructed that they could be made to appear as if they were lifting weights and nursing babies. This film brought tremendous publicity and encouraged Percy Smith to give up his government job.

During the War he made films for the Air Force, but in 1920 he rejoined Urban's company, then known as Kineto, until it broke up. For three years he was unemployed. Then he tried his hand at cartoons. At this time he met Bruce Woolfe, and presently joined him at Surbiton. Gnats were the subject of his first film here. After several successes came the move to Welwyn. B.I.P. took over, and he made a series dealing with the mechanism of cars.

Under contract with G.B.I., he has arranged that his work is done at home. He has a house that is a cross between a science museum and a Heath Robinson paradise. Every room is a laboratory, every garden-shed an incubator, and every greenhouse a studio. It is dangerous to touch anything, for the most innocent-looking knob or screw sets a whole series of mechanisms in motion. All the apparatus has been made by Smith with the cheapest of tools and materials.

Percy Smith wanders about country rivers and pools to find interesting subjects for films. It is he who nurses and tends them through their different stages of growth so that they may be known to a wider public. It is he who constructs the variety of gadgets that make the photographing of them possible, and it is he who quite regularly works through the night in order to note and photograph the most exciting developments of his insects and plants.

Percy Smith has always been a happy man, but now he is much happier. G.B.I. are to enter the educational field more seriously, and Percy Smith will be able to forget that films are supposed to make money. He believes they have a much greater purpose.

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Pioneer recalls struggles of early newsreel

BY FRED WATTS (PATHÉ PICTURES)

Back in the dim years when the first news film was created, news was a matter of three or four scrambled items, briefly titled, with few scenes and little of the close-up about them. But in those days, what did it matter—the great marvel was to see any kind of life on the screen, flickery and fitful though it was—and as for speed, well, certain items did get out quickly enough, but a question of a day or two was, generally speaking, neither here nor there.

Out of those beginnings in 1910 the first British Gazette started a new order. To those pioneers of a quarter of a century ago, full credit should be given, for theirs was no easy task—slow lenses, slow negative, a world which had not become cinema conscious, in fact a world which was in many cases distrustful of the cinema and in some cases even hostile.

In those days, too, officialdom was frequently very hard to convince of the necessity for any film being taken at all. They did not realise that the outside world might want to know what was happening.

Cinemas, too, were not of the super type now in existence, and projectors lacked to-day's technical excellence and reliability. Volumes could be written of the adventures of some of the early pioneers—names like Henry Sanders, Danvers Yates (now both, alas, no more), Tommy Scales, Leslie Wyand, Jock Gemmell, Frank Bassill, Jack Cotter, Jimmy MacDowell, Ken Gordon, Monty Redknap, Tommy Cummins, Bert Bishop, B. Bromwich, Walter Buxton, Jack Hutchins, Jack Raymond, Rodney Sexton, and Jimmy Ferguson (both killed in the War), Harold Japes, M. Jentil and Rene Monca (the latter also killed in the War), George Ercole (the international globe trotter), and Emile Lauste.

All these pioneers played their part in blazing a trial across the growing screens of the world.

Some of the early newsreels were short-lived—in the hard and bitter competition of modern times only the fittest could survive, but others rose to take their place. To-day we have five newsreels—all keenly competitive, and each trying to outdo its rivals, either in speed, subject or make-up.

Out of the small 300 ft. reel of 1910, the super British newsreel of 1926 grew—750 ft. of it. When sound came, up went the length again, and to-day the average is up to 850 ft. and we have not yet seen the limit.

The three or four item Gazette became six or seven items, and to-day, eight, ten, twelve or even more items from the four corners of the world are regularly presented to an eager public.

The continued development of the News Theatre, too, may well exercise a growing influence on the length question, for the News Theatres are insatiable in their quest for news—news—and more news.

What might be uneconomical to produce for two or three News Theatres may yet be commercially possible when the numbers grow to scores and perhaps hundreds.

And what now? Well, television is dawning—as friend of the film or foe, no one knows—yet! It may be for years to come that television will be largely dependent upon film processes for the television picture. This will bring in its wake other problems—those of adequate facilities in the face of possible opposition from the newsreels. After all, many thousands of pounds are spent annually by the various newsreel companies in buying film rights and facilities for film making at events for which there is a big demand. At one time the competition between newsreel companies in obtaining exclusive rights was extremely fierce, but to-day they work in closer harmony.

Television will need to solve many problems in its early struggles, and perhaps the initial obstacles of choice of subject and facilities to take them may prove difficult to overcome.

From the far-off time of the early days to the high speed rush of to-day—a long and arduous journey to a goal none of us can quite foresee, a continual struggle for supremacy.

SENSATIONAL 'QUEEN MARY' NEWSREEL

POOR CUTTING MARS CRACK PHOTOGRAPHY

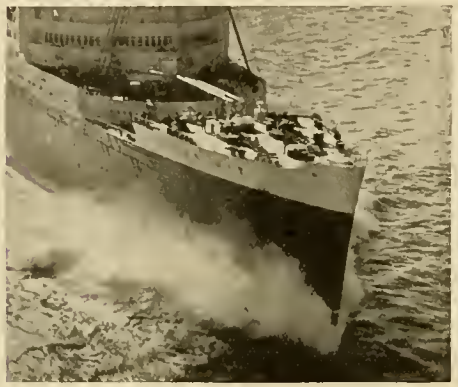
Cameramen: E. P. Genock, Jack Harding, Jim Gemmell, W. M. MacGregor

Paramount News is to be congratulated on their handling of the *Queen Mary* story. Rarely in a newsreel or anywhere else does one see shooting equal to Paramount's handling of the arrival of the ship in New York, and her subsequent trip home.

The Paramount people were evidently dazzled by their own powers of photography into treating the story, not so much from a snappy news angle, as from the more leisurely point of view of the realist school of films. They made a fine attempt to turn the berthing of the *Queen Mary* into a ceremonial procession up-river, building it up with all sorts of significant detail usually discarded by newsreel editors as irrelevant.

The shooting is magnificent, but next time Paramount tries this sort of thing, they should call in an expert cutter trained in documentary method. The newsreel cutters were obviously at sea once the news angle was subordinated to the wider theme, and the film is draggy, lacking a little in variety and poor in tempo. It should have pulled the audience out of their seats to applaud—but somehow it just failed. And it was not for lack of material.

This applies only to the first half of the subject—the arrival in New York. The reel ends with a series of photographs from the air of the *Queen Mary*, full steam ahead, crossing the Atlantic. These days one expects newsreel photography to be of a high order, but the photography of the *Queen Mary* stands head and shoulders above anything of its kind that has yet been seen.



The shooting is perfect in photographic quality, in scale and in camera movement—no mean feat when the subject was being covered from an aeroplane. The whole sequence is just a study of a big ship at speed, cut quite simply. The camera is in motion all the time, and the reel ends with a sensational, perfectly composed and unbroken shot taken while the aeroplane circles completely round the ship.

NEWSREEL CLIPS

The newsreel theatre moves northwards. Aberdeen is the latest town in the spread of its influence. It is to seat 400 people and building is in hand.

* * *

Norman Hulbert, M.P., chief of the largest newsreel theatre circuit, says he hopes the day will come when every town with a population of 50,000 or more, will have a newsreel theatre.

Film Societies Demand Better Films

This is the film societies' off-season, in so far as no performances are held during the summer months. For the officials it should be, and for many is, a period of intensive activity, planning for the ensuing season, viewing films, taking stock.

Most societies are satisfied with progress. Reports of increased membership, revenue and prestige are common, though some of the newer bodies have not yet reached calm waters and a balanced budget. What difficulties disturb the movement are mainly concerned with internal organisation.

Lack of co-operation between the provincial and Scottish societies and the Film Society of London makes the problem of obtaining suitable films for exhibition increasingly difficult for societies outside London.

Not so long ago almost any film shown at London's continental cinemas would have pleased provincial film society audiences. But to-day Miss Cohen and the Marquis de Casa Maury would find it a tougher job to cater for the critical Sunday afternoon audience of Newcastle or Wolverhampton than for London's West End.

It is a fact—and a wholesome and encouraging fact—that the majority of London's continental films are turned down or booked only as a last resort by most film societies. A few years ago the problem was to get an audience for good films: the problem now is to get films good enough for the audience.

Of the comparatively small number of foreign films which reach the top class many, for one reason or another, are not available for film society presentation.

In tackling this problem of film supply the closest possible co-operation is necessary between all societies to ensure (1) that all continental films brought into the country are made available to film societies if they desire them. (This may involve Quota difficulties and these, too, can only be overcome by combined effort.) (2) That where necessary films will be imported specially for the use of film societies. (3) That the personnel of the London Film Society and of the provincial and Scottish societies must work in closer collaboration and in harmony.

In a recent issue of *W.F.N.* Thorold Dickenson blamed the Federation of British Film Societies for not co-operating sufficiently with the London Society. If the Federation would guarantee to book solidly only four films per year, he declared, the burden of the London Society would be eased considerably. This is a most reasonable request to which all societies, it is certain, would be eager to accede *if they could get the films.* Actually requests for Film Society presentations are frequently met with a polite refusal, There may be good reasons for this, but to the uninitiated secretary in Manchester or Dundee it is decidedly mystifying to be asked for support and to have it refused.

At the recent Federation conference at Leicester there was every evidence of a very real desire to get together on a sound basis of co-operative activity. Without exception every society represented appeared not only willing but painfully anxious to get the machinery set in motion. If the proposals for co-operative booking and importation discussed and agreed upon at the conference, and now awaiting ratification by the member societies, are made effective most of the serious troubles of the officials should be at an end. Their energies would then be released for extending local propaganda activities and for concentrating on the growth of the movement in new spheres.

Apart from the question of film supply there is another aspect of film society activity, not discussed at Leicester, which calls for co-operative effort. That is the organisation of lectures by acknowledged authorities in creative cinema. A number of societies do organise lectures and even study courses, but independently and often under difficulties in obtaining speakers and paying for their expenses.

The Council of the Federation is obviously the appropriate body to co-ordinate arrangements in this field. The importance of this feature of propaganda is sufficient to warrant considerable widening in scope and extension to every society in the movement. It should not be an impossible task to form a panel of speakers and to organise lecture tours covering societies situated in convenient geographical groups—Southern, Midland, Northern, Scottish, etc.

Expense to individual societies would thus be reduced and responsible speakers would be more ready to undertake conveniently arranged lectures which would save time wasted in travelling. This is a matter which should come before the first meeting of the Council so that an experimental scheme can be prepared ready for the coming season. Societies which would welcome such a scheme should intimate their views and requirements to the Council at the first opportunity.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

WOLVERHAMPTON'S FIRST YEAR

The first annual report of the Wolverhampton Film Society reports progress in spite of considerable difficulties. The local Watch Committee would not allow Sunday performances. Finances and membership have therefore been affected by having to rent an inferior theatre on week-nights.

Among feature films presented, Germany, Russia, France, America and Britain have been represented. "There can be no doubt," the report states, "that the first season of the Society will be remembered because of the wealth of documentary films shown. It is evident that in this direction Britain leads the world."

Three lectures—by Professor E. R. Dodds, John Barber and Stanley Hawes—have been given and a discussion group met regularly. Close contact is maintained with the neighbouring Film Society of Birmingham. The financial statement shows a small balance of cash on hand.

GLASGOW'S MIXED SEASON

The Glasgow Film Society reports a "mixty-maxty season." On the one side there have been the shorts—surely the best in the Society's history. On the other side there have been the features, some of which have been well below average.

"So consistently have we been told that the films we wanted were 'not available' that we have become almost resigned to these rebuffs." Certain of the films shown "would undoubtedly have been rejected" had others been obtainable.

Many members expressed considerable dissatisfaction with some of the presentations.

The final performance of the season included a selection of the historic films recently exhibited at the London Polytechnic.

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED BELFAST SOCIETY

Strong opposition from the churches is being experienced in trying to form a film society in Belfast with plans to hold Sunday performances next winter.

The shows will be for members only but considerable difficulty is being experienced in getting the Corporation to consider licensing the Society. Sunday cinemas are banned in Belfast.

DOUBLE-FEATURE PROGRAMMES?

At its third annual general meeting the Merseyside Film Institute Society decided to hold an enquiry into "the practice of giving double-feature programmes in the cinemas."

It also decided to form an amateur film unit for the study and production of sub-standard films. The first work planned, mainly as an experiment, is on the subject of "Transport." A composite film will be produced largely from shots new and old supplied by members.

FILM CRITIC'S LECTURE COURSE AT LEICESTER

Leslie Cargill, film critic of the *Leicester Mercury*, has been giving members of the Leicester Film Society a lecture course on "How to Look at a Film." Similar courses are planned each season by the Leicester Society, which has the co-operation of the Vaughan College of Adult Education in organising this part of its work.

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY

In addition to a successful season of shows and lectures to members, arranged in conjunction with the Midland Adult School Union, two extra meetings were arranged when *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was shown. W. H. Auden, the poet who has recently contributed verse to several G.P.O. productions, introduced a discussion. A lecture on the history and technique of the film was also given to a local girls' school.

CANADA ORGANISES

Lord Tweedsmuir is now Honorary President of the National Film Society of Canada. The President is Dr. Sydney Smith, head of Manitoba University. Lord Tweedsmuir was at one time Chairman of the Scottish Film Council.

The Society was formed a year ago for promoting the cultural aspects of cinema. It now has branches in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and Vancouver.

W.F.N.'s **aureole of birdseed goes this month to Daniel Frohman, dean of New York theatrical producers. He said:—**

"Shakespeare wrote long soliloquies and speeches in his plays for a good reason. There were about 9,000,000 people in Great Britain then and many of them could not read. They had to see the play and to hear the beauty of the poet's line spoken.

"Now we can all read, and in the plays we see we want action, movement, and not the story."

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"I WALKED INTO Joe Schenck's room unannounced, when something hit me straight in the eye."
—Viscount Castlerosse

"IS IT A heavy part? Of course it 'ud have to be altered. In pictures they've always got to alter—they've got to alter sumpin.'"
—Schnozzle Durante on "Cyrano"

"A MAN IN love is a stupid thing—he bores you stiff, in real life or anywhere else, but a woman in love is fascinating—she has a kind of aura." *—Leslie Howard*

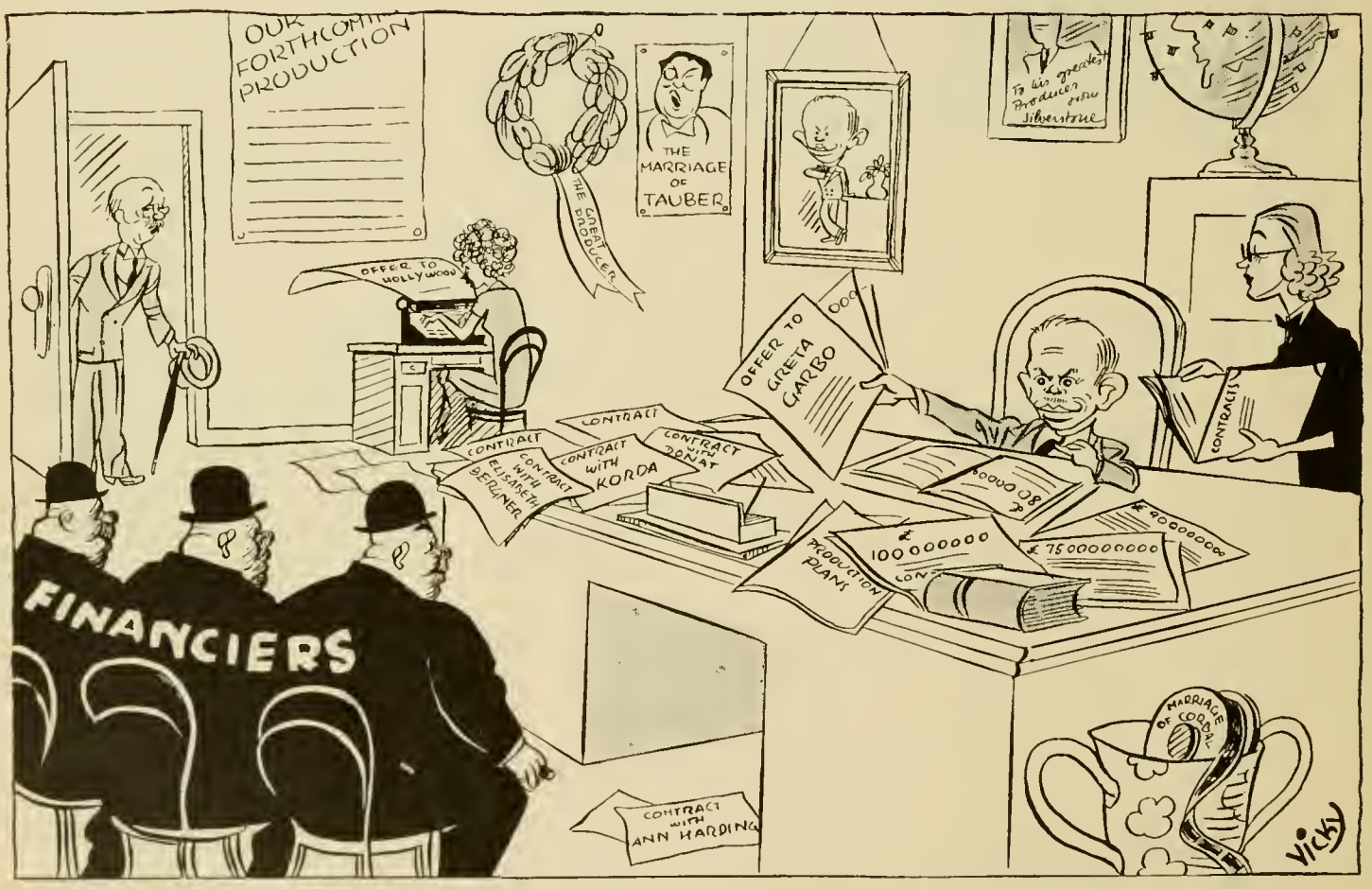
"I AM annoyed with Herbert Wilcox."
—Sydney Carroll

Fashion Note

Mary Carlisle has at last discovered a manner of arranging the back of her own hair.

She discovered a new gadget, a mirror that hangs about the shoulders on a tape, and extends upwards in the front. With this novel contraption it is possible to see the back of one's head—and make use of both hands while arranging it. Simple!

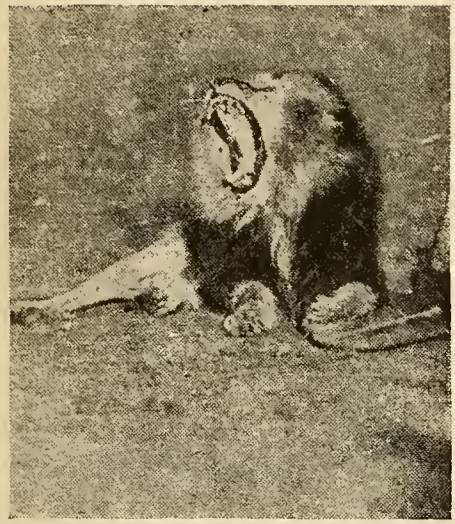
Even better is the simple gadget which enables you to do up your shoelaces without bending down. A system of hydraulic suspenders raises both legs to chin level at the touch of a button.



"ER . . . WHAT ARE YOUR PRODUCTION PLANS, MR. SCHACH?"

ORUM

"ARS GRATIA ARTIS"



Film Star Plans National Reconstruction

I have a horror of unpractical things, and, if I were a member of Parliament I would bring about a reform of a great many irritations in our daily life.

I believe that the little things of life are immensely important, and a constantly recurring irritant might develop into a public danger, influencing our lives far more than we imagine.

For instance, things like badly fitting doors; window catches that rattle in the breeze; cupboard doors which, when opened, sweep off the contents of the shelf immediately below; loud speakers which deliver more distortion than music. These things keep on niggling at us subconsciously and, who knows, may lead to the most awful consequences.

It would not surprise me in the least if medical science discovered that the degeneration of a nation could be traced back to squeaking boots!

ROBERT DONAT—In the *Star*

* * *

Jannings has received a signed photograph of Hitler for his performance in *Traumulus*.

(*Mr. Baldwin to note and take a look round the studios.*)

Jolly Ballad

ABOUT BRITISH FILMS

Sing hey! for forty novelists
At eighty pounds a week
And ho! for Spanish cameramen
Who cannot Eengleesh speak.

Hoch! Hoch! for German regisseurs
Zut! Zut! for French vedettes
(And shame on English carpenters—
They clutter up the sets).

So build another studio
And sign another star,
Announce another superfilm
And issue shares at par.

And throw a cocktail party
At a very large hotel,
Inviting all the journalists
And H. G. Wells as well.

Put out the flags in Wardour Street,
Unfurl the Union Jack,
God bless the British Studios
(And give John Jones the sack).

ENVOI

Princes, may gold Niagaras
Fall foaming in your laps,
And may you (later on) find time
To make a film—perhaps.

* * *

Professor Strunk, literary adviser to M.G.M. on *Romeo and Juliet*, was struck by resemblance between stars and famous characters of literature and mythology.

He got together with Cukor, and made a list:

Norma Shearer=Evangeline, Longfellow's beloved heroine.

Clark Gable=Galahad, the knight in shining armour who carries off young ladies on a white charger in their dreams.

Leslie Howard=Shelley.

Lionel Barrymore=Rembrandt—he etched and painted, too.

Jean Harlow=Venus of the Golden Tresses.

You're behind the times, Professor Strunk. Our British producers have been doing it for years. They realised full well that Charles Laughton=Henry VIII (or was it Rembrandt?), Anna Neagle=Nell Gwyn (sometimes known as Peg of Old Drury), Cedric Hardwicke=Charles I (Theotokopulos to his friends), and last but not least, Jessie Matthews=Jessie Matthews.

In connection with the exhibition of Surrealist pictures at the Burlington Galleries, enthusiasts proposed showings of Surrealist films *Le chien Andalou*, *L'age d'or*, etc. All arrangements were made this side of the Channel when news came across that no copy of *L'age d'or* could be found. The Catholic Church black-listed this picture and the last print was confiscated by the Teneriffe religious heads during a demonstration of Surrealism. The Vicomte de Noailles, financial sponsor, owns the negative, but as Catholic and Royalist, dare not have it shown for fear of excommunication.

Le chien Andalou has already been withdrawn from circulation only a few weeks ago. Luis Bunuel, its director, having turned orthodox communist, now repudiates it, and has rounded up all negs. and prints.

All the real Surrealist films are, of course, banned by the Surrealists.

* * *

Dave Robson says:—

I Discovered Stereoscopy

About eight years ago I startled the whole cinema world through the medium of an article published in the late trade journal, *The Bioscope*. Further, I substantiated my claims in practice, and proved that without the use of any additional apparatus whatsoever, I could provide the natural stereoscopic result at a cost not exceeding 4*d*. per head.

It was due to an accident that the discovery was made, and it happened this way.

As usual, I had departed from my projection duties for a brief rest and refreshment in the Plaza Arms, a nearby inn, and due to a cold snap was persuaded to partake of a certain beverage, stout. Now, as I will prove later, this stout had certain stereoscopic properties, which affected the eyes. Unlike common inebriation in which the liver gets definitely out of sync. with the optics, this particular stout dilated the pupils in a dichromatic fashion due to a chemical reaction set up in the blood stream, causing the pupils to pulsate in harmony and colour. On returning to the projection room I was positively thunderstruck at the amazing results; sure enough the projected picture stood out in bold relief. My assistants looked upon me with some suspicion following my outbursts, and not until such time as they too had partaken of this beverage, did they wholeheartedly agree.

Exhibitors far and wide made applications to the Justices for the necessary bar licence but this was refused, with the net result—another good scheme to popularise the movies went wrong!

FILM GUIDE

In this new feature we do not tell you what films you ought to see. We mean to help those who have difficulty in finding the films they want to see, either because they are seldom shown or because they are not always listed in ordinary press notices. Readers will appreciate that this service is not an easy one to maintain. The indifference of some film companies to specialised films prevents this service from being as comprehensive and accurate as we would wish.

SHORTS

The Birth of the Robot (Coloured puppet film)
DIRECTION: Humphrey Jennings and Len Lye. PRODUCTION: Gasparcolor, for Shell. DISTRIBUTION: Gasparcolor.
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre, Charing Cross Road July 6–11

Carmen (Colour cartoon)
DIRECTION: Anson Dyer. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre, Charing Cross Road July 27–Aug. 1

Citizens of the Future
DIRECTION: Donald Taylor. PRODUCTION: Strand Films & G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur July 23–25
The new education, from Infant to Senior Schools.

Coal Face
PRODUCTION: G.P.O. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
LEEDS: Queens July 16–18
LONDON: Monseigneur, Strand July 6–11
A documentary of the British coal industry, notable for its experimental sound bands.

Eriskay
DIRECTION and PRODUCTION: Dr. Hans Kissling. DISTRIBUTION: Zenifilms.
LONDON: Forum Cinema, Villiers Street July 19–25

The Face of Britain
DIRECTION: Paul Rotha. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Monseigneur News Theatre, Piccadilly July 27–Aug. 1
Hydro-electric power supersedes coal and the face of Britain can once again be clean.

For All Eternity
PRODUCTION: Strand Films. DIRECTOR: Marion Grierson. DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre, Charing Cross Road July 6–11

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns
PRODUCTION: A B. Svensk Filmindustri. ENGLISH PREPARATION: Donald Taylor. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre, Charing Cross Road July 20–25
A retrospect of European events for the last 40 years, including very early news-reel work.

Great Cargoes
DIRECTION: Paul Rotha. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Monseigneur News Theatre, Piccadilly July 13–15
Monseigneur News Theatre, Strand July 13–15
Sphere News Theatre, Tottenham Court Road July 13–15

Dragon of Wales
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
A travelogue which attempts to tackle economic conditions.
LONDON: Piccadilly News Theatre, Great Windmill Street July 2–5
Monseigneur News Theatre, Piccadilly July 23–25
Monseigneur News Theatre, Strand July 23–25
LIVERPOOL: Gaumont Palace July 16–18
Corona July 30–Aug. 2
MANCHESTER: Tatler July 6–11

SHORTS

Leave it to John (Carton and Cinecolour)
DRAWN BY: Ub Iwerks, Celebrity Films. PRODUCTION: Revelation Films for "Boots." DISTRIBUTION: Revelation Films.
LONDON: Imperial Cinema, Edgware Road July 6–11
News Theatre, Waterloo Station July 6–8
Worlds News Theatre, Praed Street July 9–11
Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square July 6–11
Everyman Theatre, Hampstead July 6–11
Eros News Theatre, Piccadilly Circus July 13–15
News Theatre, Victoria Station July 19–22
Cameo News Theatre, Charing Cross Road July 27–29
BIRMINGHAM: Warwick Cinema, Acocks Green July 6–11
Warley Theatre July 27–Aug. 1
BRISTOL: Hippodrome July 13–18
His Majesty's July 20–22
LEEDS: Capitol, Meanwood July 13–18
Town Picture House July 20–25
Shaftesbury July 27–Aug. 1
LEICESTER: Trocadero July 6–11
Westleigh July 23–25
Evington July 27–29
LIVERPOOL: Tatler News Theatre July 15–18
MANCHESTER: Scala July 20–25
Regent Super July 27–Aug. 1

Metropolitan Nocturne
DISTRIBUTION: Radio.
LONDON: Everyman Theatre, Hampstead July 6–12
"Avant-garde."

March of Time
PRODUCTION: Editors of "Time." DISTRIBUTION: Radio.
Dynamic Journalism.
LONDON: No. 6 Classic Cinema, Chelsea July 12–15
No. 7 Classic Cinema, Chelsea July 26–28
Grand Cinema, Edgware Road July 27–Aug. 1
No. 8 Blue Hall, Edgware Road June 29–July 4
BIRMINGHAM: No. 8 Lozells July 13–15
BRISTOL: No. 8 Globe Cinema July 27–29
GLASGOW: No. 7 Orient June 29–July 4
No. 8 Cranston's June 29–July 4
Orient July 27–29
LEICESTER: No. 7 Carlton July 18
Evington July 8
Westleigh July 11
Knighton July 15
No. 8 Palace July 22
LIVERPOOL: No. 5 Picture Playhouse July 16–18
No. 6 Palladium July 2–4
No. 7 Capitol July 9–11
Princess July 6–8
Derby July 23–25
Palladium July 30–Aug. 1
No. 8 Tatler July 6–11
King's July 23–25
Garrick July 13–15
Princes July 20–22
NEWCASTLE: No. 7 Gaiety July 23–25

FILM GUIDE (continued)

SHORTS

Night Mail

DIRECTION: Basil Wright and Harry Watt. PRODUCTION: G.P.O. Unit. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

LONDON: Palace, Kilburn	July 6–8
LIVERPOOL: Carlton	July 30–Aug. 1
Granada (Dovecot)	July 30–Aug. 1
MIDDLESBROUGH: Grand Electric	July 6–8
STAFFORD: Picture House	July 30–Aug. 1
BATH: Little Theatre	July 30–Aug. 1
BRISTOL: Triangle	July 27–Aug. 1
Empire	July 27–Aug. 1
DUNDEE: Palace	July 23–25
Plaza	July 23–25
BURTON-ON-TRENT: Regent	July 16–18
IPSWICH: Hippodrome	July 20–25
LLANDUDNO: Savoy	July 13–15
WHITBY: Palace	July 9–11
SWINDON: Regent	July 6–11
WEST BROMWICH: Tower	July 27–Aug. 1
WALSALL: Her Majesty's	July 20–25

The north-bound Postal Special. Some commentary is in verse by W. H. Auden.

On the Fishing Banks of Skye

PRODUCTION: EMPO. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
LONDON: World News Theatre, Praed Street July 23–25

Progress

PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONDON: Sphere News Theatre, Tottenham Court Road	July 6–8
Piccadilly News Theatre, Great Windmill Street	July 16–18
GLASGOW: Cambridge	July 27–29

The development of communications made in co-operation with the National Physical Laboratory.

"Secrets of Life" Series

EDITING: Mary Field. TECHNICAL SUPERVISION: Percy Smith. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

Imaginative descriptions of natural processes.

We Are Seven

LONDON: Sphere News Theatre, Tottenham Court Road July 13–15

Butterflies and Nettles

LONDON: Sphere News Theatre, Tottenham Court Road July 20–22

Mixed Bathing

LONDON: Piccadilly News Theatre, Great Windmill Street July 6–8

Home from the South

LONDON: Piccadilly News Theatre, Great Windmill Street July 23–25

Shipyard

DIRECTION: Paul Rotha. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONDON: Monseigneur News Theatre, Piccadilly	July 20–22
Strand News Theatre, Agar Street	July 27–29
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	July 16–18
SOUTHAMPTON: Picture House	July 26–Aug. 1

The building and launching of the liner, "Orion."

Spring on the Farm

DIRECTION: Evelyn Spice. PRODUCTION: E.M.B. Unit. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
LIVERPOOL: Casino July 22

This was England

DIRECTION: Mary Field. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
SOUTHAMPTON: Picture House July 5–11

A Suffolk documentary.

The World Rolls On.

PRODUCTION: Publicity Films Ltd. DIRECTION: Ralph Smart

Latest film produced for the Dunlop Rubber Co. It traces the history of the wheel, and the direct selling angle has been entirely ignored.

LEICESTER: Carlton Cinema, Gipsy Lane	July 2–4
Westleigh Kinema, Fosse Road South, Westleigh	July 2–4
BIRMINGHAM: Odeon, Birchfield Road, Perry Barr	June 29–July 4
BRISTOL: Embassy, Queens Avenue, Clifton	July 6–11

Wheatlands of East Anglia

DIRECTION: Mary Field. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: News Theatre, Victoria Station July 23–25

BRITISH FEATURE FILM

The Turn of the Tide

DIRECTION: Norman Walker. STARRING: John Garrick and Joan Maude. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LEEDS: Rialto	July 13–18
LEICESTER: Aylestone	July 20–25
Belgrave	July 6–8
Tudor	July 9–11
MANCHESTER: Regent, Fallowfield	July 6–11

FOREIGN FILMS

La Dame Aux Camellias (French)

DIRECTION: Fernand Rivers. STARRING: Yvonne Printemps. DISTRIBUTION: Exclusive Films.
LONDON: Forum, Villiers Street July 12–18

La Maternelle (French)

DIRECTION: Jean Benoit-Levy. DISTRIBUTION: Universal.
LONDON: Everyman, Hampstead June 29–July 1

Child psychology.

Letzte Rose (German)

STARRING: Helge Roswaenge (Tenor). DISTRIBUTION: Tobis.
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford Street June 11–July

From Flotow's "Martha."

The Phantom Gondola (French)

DIRECTION: Augusto Genina. DISTRIBUTION: Film Export. STARRING: Marcelle Chantal.
LONDON: Curzon Cinema, Curzon Street June 23–July

From the novel by Dekobra

Remous (French)

DIRECTION: Edmond Greville. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
LONDON: Everyman, Hampstead July 2–5

Sans Famille (French)

STARRING: Robert Lynen. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
LONDON: Everyman, Hampstead July 13–19

Savoy Hotel 217 (German)

DIRECTION: Gustav Ucicky. STARRING: Hans Albers. DISTRIBUTION: Ufa.
LONDON: Curzon Cinema, Curzon Street

Following "Phantom Gondola."

The Student of Prague (German)

DIRECTION: Arthur Robison. STARRING: Adolf Wohlbruck, Dorothea Wieck. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
LONDON: Everyman Theatre, Hampstead July 6–12

We are the Foreign Press

The author of this article is a well-known Hollywood Journalist. For obvious reasons he wishes to remain anonymous.

"The work of a representative of an English film paper in Hollywood, sounds like 'jam.' World-famous stars and studios are within easy reach—he has only to write the stuff. *You* try it for a change.

"I know an English newspaperman in Hollywood who was commissioned to get an interview with a certain leading star. Despite continual applications at the studio he was kept waiting for just over a month. Yet the star was in the studio every day. Another English representative wanted good stills of a new film for a special feature. The only ones he was allowed to see were in a batch that had already been picked over by American journalists. The same man had a good story which the studio refused to allow to be published. Yet the same story appeared in an American newspaper a few days later.

"It is to combat such evils that the Foreign Press Society has recently been formed. Its aim is to get better treatment for 'The Foreign Press.'

"In this country we are apt to think that our film papers are pretty important, and that, as they are written in the English language, they mean something in Hollywood, too. The fact is that, by Hollywood studios, they are classed with publications from France, Germany, Czecho-Slovakia and anywhere else you like outside the United States, under the general heading, 'The Foreign Press.' And 'The Foreign Press' means nearly nothing to Hollywood.

"The reason for this disregard of non-American papers is, I believe, that, to a Hollywood studio official, 'Publicity' means something that he himself can *see*. He can buy *Photoplay*, *Motion Picture Classic* and others on almost any newsstand. An M.G.M. man sees a copy with Joan Crawford on the cover: a Paramount man sees Dietrich smiling at the world: another opens an American publication and notes with satisfaction that his newest star is giving cooking lessons. Good publicity.

"Now consider *Film Weekly*, *Picturegoer*, *Film Pictorial*, *Picture Show* or *World Film News*. Only on one or two specialised news-stands in New York or Hollywood will he ever see these. If he subscribes to them his secretary probably disposes of them with slick American efficiency. The papers exist to him as vague 'Foreign' publications.

"Consequently, 'Foreign' representatives are scarcely considered. Let us hope that the Foreign Press Society will succeed in impressing on studios that 'the Foreign Press,' although it may not appear on the news-stands of America, is read by millions of prospective film-goers in other countries."

Film Society Officials Go Professional

Experience in film society work seems to be a useful preliminary to entering cinema professionally. If the ideals which have inspired the film societies movement are thereby carried into the trade these new recruits may be able to assert their influence better from the inside than from the outside.

Among recent "transfers" are:

Stanley Russell, joint secretary of the Scottish Film Council and secretary of the Glasgow Meteor Film Producing Society, who has entered production as director of the new *Scottish Newsreel*.

S. J. C. Watsham, organiser of the Maidenhead Film Society, who becomes director of the Empire Theatre, Windsor.

Cyril Ray, assistant secretary of the Merseyside Film Institute Society, now manager of the Tatler News Theatre, Manchester.

Stanley Hawes, formerly secretary of the Birmingham Film Society, is now producing with Strand Films.

J. S. Fairfax-Jones, director of the Everyman, Hampstead, and of Denning Films, Ltd., distributors of Continental films, was for many years secretary of the Southampton Film Society.

Gaumont-British will shortly add to its staff a well-known official of the Aberdeen Film Society.

Producers take Note!

London is changing so rapidly from an 18th and 19th century city to a 20th, that film companies will have to hurry to make authentic records of characteristic corners and buildings before they are condemned and demolished. If a Library of such material is not collected and properly documented, research departments will have a difficult time in the future, to reconstruct correctly the face of London to-day. Who remembers exactly what Regent Street, Piccadilly Circus, Park Lane, looked like a few years ago? Yet the change has come in our own life time. Adelphi Terrace is being destroyed, Carlton House Terrace is threatened, large blocks of flats go up in place of 18th century houses. The aspect of London is being altered so quickly that film companies could do a work of national historic importance by recording these changes.

March of Time in Scotland

Mr. Richard de Rochemont, European editor of *March of Time*, announces that an item dealing with Scotland will be included in an early issue. This item will not be concerned with kilts and bagpipes but will deal with the tougher problems of industry.

New Group Activity

The Group Theatre announces a film section, called *Film Group*, which will be started in September.

Its aims are practical, and its curriculum includes classes on film production, lectures, demonstrations, and film shows. Later, the production of shorts is envisaged.

Film Group will be under the directon of Basil Wright and Rupert Doone.

Film Jargon worries

ADRIAN BRUNEL

After some years of existence as an art or a craft, film-making has evolved a tolerably understandable terminology of its technique, although some of the words we use are preposterous inventions. *Title* is one, though it might have been worse had we adopted the peculiar synonym I discovered in a script submitted to me some time ago by "A Yorkshire Mother"—she called each one of her voluble captions a *snippet*. Such words as **Blimp*, †*Dolly* and ‡*Gobo* sound more like a comic strip than technical expressions, but I suppose we must accept them and derive some comfort from the fact that *blimps* are seldom used nowadays, *trolly* and *track* are replacing the use of the word *dolly*, and the *nigger* is ousting his first cousin the *gobo*.

In my book "Filmcraft" I tried to explain and record the principal expressions used in the cutting-room, in script-writing, and in shooting a film. In my Glossary I have attempted to fix a definition of our technical jargon, though I admit that this can only be temporary, for I remember the words of my favourite American author, Ambrose Bierce, when he defined a dictionary as "an ingenious instrument for crippling a language."

There are still a number of words and expressions, not necessarily technical, that worry me. For instance—*amateur*. I have been accused of writing for the amateur, as it it were a sin, though in my recent book "Film Production" I was at some pains to introduce the word *student* as a substitute. Actually I did not write exclusively for the amateur or student, though it may be tactful to appear to do so when one is trying to drag the professional into a discussion. But we need a new word to differentiate between the rank amateur and the expert student. I am not certain of the precise significance of the word *cinéaste*, but I would not recommend its use in English, as I recall the fate of *montage* when it was adopted in England.

Unfortunately, my dictionary of synonyms is no help. Looking up *amateur*, I am first referred to "Unskilfulness," where I find "incompetence, clumsiness, quackery, mismanagement, bungling and too many cooks," which might just as well be applied to professionals, even if we do not insert an "r" in the last word. I am next referred to "desire," and all the help I get here is "lover, devotee, aspirant, solicitant, candidate, cormorant and sychophant."

What are we to do about it? *Filmcraftsman* is cumbersome and too arty: *ciné-technician* sounds too mechanical and is not sufficiently arty. Perhaps the gentleman who invented *Gobo* will supply the missing word.

* Camera cover used to keep camera silent lined with absorbent cork or rubber.

† A four-wheeled truck used for making tracking shots where the camera moves in or out of a scene.

‡ A blackboard used to prevent a lamp shining in certain directions.

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE CINEMA

PROGRAMME FOR JULY

Empire programmes of Life, Scenery and Industry, for schools and all those interested in the countries of the British Commonwealth of Nations

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28th June to 4th July—Gold—South African Fruit Harvest.

7th to 11th July—Australia—Heart of Australia—Fruit Canning—Dried Fruit (Story of the Sultana)—Making Butter.
Monsoon Island (Ceylon)—Air Post (G.P.O.).

12th to 18th July—How Gas is Made—South Africa—Dance of the Harvest (Rice)—Negombo Coast (Native Fishermen, Ceylon)—Under the City (G.P.O.).

19th to 25th July—O'er Hill and Dale—The Other Half of the World—King Log—Villages of Lanka (Ceylon)—Radio Interference (G.P.O. & B.B.C.).

26th July to 1st August—Industrial Britain—Locomotives—Alert To-day, Alive To-morrow (Road Safety Film)—Canberra, Australia's Federal Capital—Conquest of the Prickly Pear—John Atkins Saves Up (P.O. Savings Bank).

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JUNE 1936. Price one shilling.

The July number will contain poems by Wallace Stevens, E. E. Cummings, Dylan Thomas, Kerker Quinn, Gavin Ewart, also another traditional ballad, a Greenland folk-legend and a story by Isaac Babel.

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We hope you have enjoyed reading the first number of WORLD FILM NEWS in its new form. The Film Guide, published in this issue, is going to be a regular feature; in the near future, we shall expand it, and include more towns, and we shall also widen its scope by including shows at film societies, and other clubs and organisations. This guide gives the booking dates and places of the *Best* Continental, Documentary and other Specialised, which we think are of particular interest to W.F.N. readers. Another regular feature is the REVIEW OF REVIEWS.

Another section we want to draw your special attention to is what we've so far called "Public Relations"; under this heading come Documentaries, Advertising, Propaganda, and Publicity, and Educational Films. You will notice this section increase in successive issues, because it's a subject that's becoming increasingly important.

There's a regular section on COLOUR, and a regular section on MUSIC IN FILMS in each issue. There's regular news from the studios at home and abroad; there's a regular page for the amateur cinematographer. There's regular news from the Film Societies. (*W.F.N. is the official organ of the Federation of Film Societies*).

This issue contains a special RADIO AND TELEVISION SUPPLEMENT—if you've read this, you'll know what our angle on these subjects is.

WORLD FILM NEWS is a magazine about *films, and the men who make them.* If these subjects interest you, why not post a cheque or postal order right away for a year's subscription to:—

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what the press says...

Fun Comes First in New Boots' Film

Entertainment value and the advertiser's message are blended to just the right degree in "Leave it to John," a new publicity film produced for Boots, the multiple chemists, by Revelation Films, Ltd.

"Leave it to John," now being shown at cinemas throughout the country, is a comic colour cartoon. It has the qualities which give a cartoon entertainment value—100 per cent. animation, vivid use of colours, lively musical accompaniment.

There is no trace of too obvious "advertising" in this film. Entertainment comes first. Boots' message isn't allowed to interfere with the story. It slips into its logical place—the climax to which the story leads.

This simple story is treated so lightly, so much in the manner of a cartoon designed for entertainment and nothing further, that no audience can complain of being deceived.

Advertiser's Weekly, 18/6/36

The colour film "See How They Won," made by us for Messrs. Boots Pure Drug Co., Ltd., was shown in hundreds of cinemas all over the country, many of which had never before shown advertising films. Its success was phenomenal because it combined 100% entertainment with a sound sales appeal. This is but one of many REVELATION successes . . . let us demonstrate how REVELATION can produce films to stimulate sales for your products or service.

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world FILM news

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MONTHLY 1S. AUGUST

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THE MARCH OF TIME

Since "THE MARCH OF TIME" was introduced to this country by Radio Pictures, it has climbed rapidly to popularity, until it now equals in this country the enormous success it enjoys in the United States.

Over eight hundred theatres regularly play "THE MARCH OF TIME" —a splendid tribute to this new form of screen journalism.

...TIME MARCHES ON

LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 800 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Forum ...	Southampton.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ..	Ealing.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware.
South Cinema	Hackney.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Ritz	Tunbridge Wells.
Grand ...	Bournemouth.
Regent ...	Norwich.
Hippodrome	Ipswich.
Atherley ...	Southampton.
Broadway ...	Southampton.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Court ...	Wigan.
Cinema ...	Euston.
Picturedrome	Eastbourne.
Gaiety ...	Hastings.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Elite ...	Nottingham.
Coliseum ...	Derby.
Empire ...	Coventry.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli ...	Portsmouth.
Sphere ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Palace ...	Greenock.
Royal ...	Wolverhampton.
Central ...	Reading.
Kings ...	Leyton.
Empire ...	Walthamstow.
Palace ...	Aldershot.
Theatre de Luxe	Gloucester.
Theatre ...	Cambridge.
Odeon ...	Guildford.
Langham ...	Hull.
Carlton ...	Hull.
Shaftesbury	Leeds.
Pavilion ...	Chelmsford.
Albert ...	Swansea.
Savoy ...	Reading.
Windsor ...	Smethwick.
Savoy ...	Northampton.
Curzon ...	Brighton.
Savoy ...	Nottingham.
Berridge Road	Nottingham.
Kings ...	Exeter.
Empire ...	Exeter.
Headgate ...	Colchester.
Troxy ...	Brighton.
Fosse Cinema	Leicester.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
West End ...	Wolverhampton.
Aspley ...	Nottingham.
Odeon ...	Blackheath, Birmingham.
Allerton ...	Derby.
Cinedrome ...	Plymouth.
Regent ...	Hertford.
Palace ...	Blackpool.
Synod ...	Edinburgh.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Orient ...	Ayr.
Monseigneur	Edinburgh.
Alhambra ...	Dunfermline.
Gaiety ...	Leith.
Cranstone ...	Glasgow.
Palladium ...	Morecambe.
Deansgate ...	Manchester.
Majestic ...	Blackburn.
Rivoli ...	Worthing.
Regal ...	Canterbury.
Queens ...	Stirling.
Tivoli ...	Edinburgh.
Palace ...	Rothesay.
Picture House	Dumbarton.
Commodore...	Liverpool.
Cecil ...	Hull.
Rialto ...	York.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.
Picture House	Carlisle.
Royal ...	Liverpool.
Lyceum ...	Govan.
Playhouse ...	Peebles.
Astoria ...	Aberdeen.
Orient ...	Glasgow.
Opera House	Kirkcaldy.
Rio	Rutherglen.
Regal ...	Dumfries.
Majestic ...	Dundee.
Palace ...	Rochdale.
Savoy ...	Blackburn.
Dominion ...	Leeds.
Regal ...	Coatbridge.
Playhouse ...	Peterhead.
La Scala ...	Motherwell.
Plaza... ...	Crewe.
Picture House	St. Andrews.
City ...	Peterboro'.
Playhouse ...	Inverness.
Playhouse ...	Elgin.
Central ...	Airdrie.
Royalty ...	Douglas, I. of M.
Empire ...	Carnarvon.
Elite	Bradford.
Royal ...	Middlesbrough.
Brittania ...	Dundee.
Pavilion ...	Wick.
Star	Sheffield.
Alex	Paisley.
West End ...	Paisley.
Astoria ...	Belfast.
Capital ...	Belfast.
Broadway ...	Belfast.
Strand ...	Londonderry.
Lyceum ...	Bradford.
Monseigneur	Piccadilly.
Monseigneur	Strand.
Coliseum ...	Aberystwyth.

Mr. THERM

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A REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN ENGLAND TO-DAY

—in industry, housing and the home. We are moving towards better working conditions, healthier and more comfortable homes. The film shows how applied science is easing life for men and women alike. It takes us from Sheffield to the Cotswolds; from Wythenshawe to the Great West Road; it visits housing estates in town and country; it shows the beginning of a new England.

A FILM ABOUT COOKING

This is a big step towards good nutrition. Two famous chefs show the art of cooking simple things. One prepares a meal such as you yourself could produce at home. Another reveals many of those secret ways of doing ordinary things which are known as chefs' tips and are never found in cookery books. And it's not just straight cookery—a humorist gets into the kitchen with the chef!

GETTING INTO HOT WATER

People don't realise just what trouble and annoyance is caused in every household where there is not enough hot water. Mr. Therm makes his first appearance as a star on the screen, and solves all their difficulties with his new water heaters. This is a sensible film about a real problem, but cheerfulness and music keep breaking in.

★ *The Gas Light and Coke Company will gladly arrange a complimentary showing of the programme to any society in its own area which can provide a suitable and reasonably numerous audience, and a hall. In the rest of England, all those interested, should approach their own Gas Undertaking, through whose courtesy it may be possible to arrange a showing.*

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world FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

VOL. I NO. 5 | PRICE: ONE SHILLING | AUGUST 1936

CELLULOID CHILDREN

By WINIFRED HOLMES

Froebel-trained child psychologist and poet

A PORTLY SMALL boy aged three staggered into his mother's drawing-room where a party was in progress, lugging an attaché case. "Where are you going, Hugh?" "Away for the week-end; this is my wuggage." "Is it indeed! Let's see what you've taken away with you."

The case was opened and in it was precisely one roll of toilet paper!

This little incident reveals the intense but distorted realism of the child mind. The real stuff of life, not fairy stories or fantasies, was what his imagination fed on. Going away for the week-end, taking his "wuggage," packing the case with what seemed to him the most important thing of all; not toys or books, but something real and with a necessary function. Food would come to him, clothes just appear; but toilet paper—well, he must take his own supply!

It is almost impossible, or rarely possible, once we have passed the borderline of adolescence, to re-enter this world of childhood. We realise sadly that children are not just inexperienced humans, but a different race altogether. So we sentimentalise childhood in nauseating and false fashion. Take for example the Shirley Temple films. In them a precocious and clever child is made to reflect this sentimental adult attitude towards children. The dear little one can melt the hardest gangster heart; she can bring together estranged couples; tears start to the stoniest eyes. Her appeal is sob-stuff, smacking of the efforts of third-rate female novelists of a century ago.

In reality children are not interested in the problems of adults. That is, unless there is something to be got out of them! They are so busy adjusting themselves to life and the material world, that the focus of their interest lies elsewhere. The early American child "gang" pictures, with the freckled Irish boy as leader, were psychologically true to this fact. Intent on their own nefarious business irrespective of the grown-up life about them, the gangs were self-sufficient in their own minds, except when authority impinged on this splendid isolation and forced upon them an adult point of view.

This is still more true of that perfect child-film *Emil and the Detectives*. Somehow a miracle has taken place—an adult has slipped back into childhood and completely taken on its point of view. Emil and his friends have no more contact with the city world than Zulus would have. They are utterly absorbed in their adventure, the chase of the thief—an ordinary man, distorted by their vision into a macabre character, physically and mentally. The boy who rides into his home on his "mustang" can't understand his mother's denseness in not seeing at once that it *is* his mustang and not his scooter. The little rich boy whose job is to watch the telephone and who will not be budged from his post for the ordinary functions of sleeping and eating—these are authentic. Adults realise this authenticity; children adore the film.

Children also adore Shirley Temple—but for another reason. Because she has achieved a sophistication and at-homeness in the world that they themselves yearn after and admire. She is the beau ideal of all little American girls. They want to look like her, to dance and sing like her, and to be also without any shyness or self-consciousness whatever. But they do not enjoy her *films*, or rather, *vehicles*, to the same degree. These are, as I said before, entirely adult conceptions, false to childhood.

Freddie Bartholomew comes into the same category. He too is made to reflect this sentimental grown-up attitude towards children. His screen character is unnatural and sweetish. "Pi" he would have been called in robust young male circles. Jackies Coogan and Cooper were his direct forerunners, but in their day films were more naïve and full of action, so the curse was largely taken off their performances.

Jackie Searle is a more interesting child character. He is usually the spoilt wealthy sneering American boy of fourteen or so; a definitely unpleasant type, but a fairly common one across the Atlantic. It is a healthy sign that Hollywood producers are allowing that children are not all, or always, angels. Jane Withers is a good foil to Temple sentiment. The two bad little schemers in *We Three* got away with murder and the entire picture. Here they meddled in adult life, but for

Shirley Temple

something they could get out of it. They did not realise for an instant what harm they were doing; they only knew they were advantaging themselves.

French producers have seen children in another light altogether. That is as innocent helpless victims of environment and circumstance. They are not sentimentalised or moralised over as in Dickens. They are natural children, seen clearly and whole, who are caught in a web of unhappiness. In the Robert Lynen films this sentiment of pity is exploited into mawkishness and occasionally horror. In *La Maternelle* and *Zéro de Conduite* sentiment is never sentimentality; there is nothing melodramatic in Paulette Elambert's attempted suicide. It is part of a logical progression of events and emotions, not dragged in to harrow our feelings.

La Maternelle is a masterpiece, a film classic, a document of scientific interest to every child psychologist. In *Emil and the Detectives* the children evidently came from happy homes, and could therefore focus their attention on anything but the adults surrounding them. They were free from them, so to speak. The children in *La Maternelle* have no such freedom. Victims of circumstance, they depend on stranger adults for life, affection and happiness. So their focus is pathetically on the people round them. Remember the sad little Jewish baby's sudden half smile at Madeleine Renaud—a smile of returning confidence and carefree babyhood? An almost unbearable smile. Paulette Eluard herself lives in the poverty-striken "Zone" of Paris. She knows the part she plays; tragic children live all round her. She is not acting; she lives her part.

Zéro de Conduite is also a masterpiece of child insight. Here the boys are victims of circumstance insofar as they are shut up together at boarding-school, a kind of prison. But here the adults are isolated, inimical. The boys have to band together against adultism, exemplified by the masters. These masters are distorted by the boys' vision into strange beings, quite inexplicable. There is the narrow tall master who has shot up out of his clothes till coat and sleeves and trousers are ridiculously short for him; a kind of feline master who is not actually terrifying but just a little mad; stealthy, silent, prowling, not malevolent. The headmaster is a child, dressed as a pompous old man with long beard. When he rows a boy he swells up and advances threateningly upon him till a loud explosion occurs (entirely silently and in the boy's mind), after which he subsides again. This is a remarkable shot. When I was at school my headmistress used to call the older girls into her study separately, to row them about something. It seemed to me her eyes turned bright red and shot out lurid beams like searchlights. She trembled with rage and seemed to come closer, closer, till suddenly the hypnotic spell broke and she was a little elderly woman again, clutching the table in a desperate attempt to control herself. After my terror I found myself despising her and yet feeling sorry for her at the same time.

It is definitely established by authorities that children do not like terror and horror exploited on the screen. They experience it in real life; how little we know the terrors and inhibitions our careless words, story-telling, anger may bring on them. *Frankenstein* and such films are hated, and in my opinion should not on any account be seen by children under eighteen. Adventure and excitement films are different altogether, though cruelty and harrowing scenes should be left out of them when they are shown to young audiences; their effect is too terrible and far-reaching.

Children have a natural and instinctive feeling for justice and fair-play, kindness and self-sacrifice. They always respond to the hero-villain simplicities—cheering and booing accordingly. This is the preservation-of-the-herd instinct in its pristine state, before it is overlaid by paper-rules of conduct or by expediency. Margery Locket says she has known children respond to the principles of right and wrong in films with quite foreign environments, and in situations they cannot possibly have heard of. This is no parrot morality, but the phenomenon of pure social instinct.

Jane Withers

The fact that children dislike love and sex in films is well known but superficially analysed. It is generally considered that they are just not interested, being unaware as yet of this side of human life. In reality they are deeply aware of it and are frightened and repelled by its manifestations too early in their development. In defence they laugh or appear bored. As soon as adolescence is fully entered upon sex becomes of the greatest interest, though still there is a lingering repulsion. In my opinion children should never be shown films with a love or sex basis. They are disturbing and may cause a psychic complex of revulsion lasting long after proper development has taken place and threatening normality.

"Son Autre Amour" (By courtesy of "The Academy")

Pommer Directs Directors

"BUT WHEN I influence a director he may not be aware of it," says Mr. Pommer. "We discuss, I compromise, my director compromises. When we go on to the set the director knows what he is going to do, and I know what is going to be done. A script should be complete before the work is commenced: all preparation on a picture is well spent. I will not tell a director what he should do when he is in the studio, but I am always somewhere about so that I can be asked." And he is. Pommer goes from department to department, the cutting room, the wardrobe, the publicity department: to see the rushes, then up to the office, then back to the set. But in the midst of this vigilant watch on what is being done by all his employees he still appears to have time, and when he talks to anyone he does so with full attention. There is no pose of the 'great' man about Pommer and when he talks it is not as an autocrat; only his walk—very swift strides and a vigorous movement of his arms—suggests that by hook or by crook he will get things done. In this man, whom Paul Rotha has called the 'real genius behind the great years of the German cinema,' business capacity is allied to astonishing perception of the artistic possibilities of cinema, and an exceptional appreciation of what people can be encouraged to do and become.

The three directors whom Pommer has working for his new company, Pendennis Productions, at Denham, are William K. Howard, Cameron Menzies and René Clair. Howard, director of *Vanessa* and *Rendezvous*, is making his first British picture *Fire Over England* with Flora Robson as Queen Elizabeth; Menzies will direct *Troop Ship* which Pommer describes as a peculiarly English subject; René Clair will make a film of the old-time music halls, *A Bicycle Built for Two*, which was once upon a time to have been made under the auspices of Korda.

The script of *Fire Over England* is not quite as exact as the Child's History of England, for it is based upon the novel of the same name by A. E. W. Mason and adapted by Clemence Dane and Sergei Nolbandov, but it is a fairly exciting thriller. Korda had many scripts for this long delayed picture including one by Ferdinand Bruckner (reported in the first issue of *W.F.N.*). This script was discarded because certain of the characters were so German, it was felt that the British public would not accept them. M. S.

Paul Rotha in Arms

SIR,

I wish to draw attention to the showing of my documentary film *Shipyard* at the Monseigneur News Theatre, Piccadilly, London, on July 20th, 21st and 22nd. This film, which in its original version depicts the building of the liner *S.S. Orion* and its relation to the life of the town Barrow-in-Furness, and which took over a year to produce, has been mutilated in a way which, in my opinion and in the opinion of many people who have seen the film, is unpardonable. Not only were the credit titles to myself and my technical staff omitted, but whole sequences were cut out, making the story and the meaning of the film quite incomprehensible.

To my knowledge many people are going to this theatre because they associate the film with the advancing documentary movement. The discredit thus done to the documentary group and to my work as a film director is likely to cause great harm in the future. If several chapters were deleted at random by his publishers from a novel by J. B. Priestley, or if a painting by Augustus John were partly obliterated with stamp paper by the Hanging Committee of the Royal Academy, public opinion would give rise to an outcry and the author or painter would have legal redress. We in the documentary film field are sincerely trying to fulfil a national purpose by portraying aspects of our national life on the screen. We have no redress against such mutilation of our work, except to ask your leave to publish this protest.

Yours etc.,

PAUL ROTHA.

Is it Gaumont *British?*

THE BARS of Wardour Street have been agog this month with discussions of the new international deal linking Gaumont-British, 20th Century-Fox, and Loews Inc.

Loews, in addition to owning a theatre circuit in America, are the financial backers of M.G.M. By this deal the Loew concern are expected to take over from 20th Century-Fox a half interest in the latter's holding in Gaumont-British.

Mr. Joseph Schenck, Chairman of 20th Century-Fox has announced that a new company will be formed. It is probable that this company will have a capital of approximately £3,000,000, and a substantial block of its stock will be sold to the British public. It is understood that Mr. Beddington Behrens, nephew of Sir Montagu Burton, of the 50 Shilling Tailors, may be chairman. Mr. Behrens is a partner in Myers and Company, a firm of Throgmorton Street brokers.

The resources of the companies concerned in the deal are:

Loews Incorporated: assets totalling £25,000,000: a circuit of 169 theatres, cinemas, etc., in the United States and Canada.

20th Century-Fox: total assets about £11,000,000. Produces and distributes through a number of subsidiary companies.

Gaumont-British: owns or controls over 300 theatres; has a number of film holding companies, and *is substantially interested in Baird Television.*

American papers are openly claiming that the deal represents domination of the group by American interests.

"Tatler," well-known columnist of the *Film Renter*, says:

"For once the Americans—and I particularly indicate the Schenck Brothers—have not been clever! This move of theirs, with its evident desire to control and direct a vast circuit of theatres and studios, is not far-sighted—it's definitely the shortest-sighted policy any American concern has embarked upon to date . . .

"And now—what? Revolutionary changes in the industry are certain. *First I envisage, if this deal is finally consummated, the eventual break-up of the K.R.S.* It must happen—that sticks out a mile. Just think for a moment. The main function of the Renters' Society has been to stop exhibitor combines. . . .

"But it would be absolutely ludicrous for them to object any longer to exhibitor booking combines, when the three largest renter-producers themselves combine under one banner to regulate prices! . . .

". . . What do you suppose he (John Maxwell)* is going to do—lie down and take this situation lightly? Not if I know him! And that's only one aspect of this alarming attempt to corner the British industry—*because that is what it is, any way you look at it!* . . .

"So now I ask you the question—have the Schencks been clever? Their present action means Government intervention of some kind or other, possibly in an indirect way—whether it be increased Quota, or a heavy import duty. *The latter would mean a cost to the American industry of at least one to one and a half millions a year.* . . .

"Public opinion, too, is profoundly affected. . . . England does not like the thought of American-dominated kinemas. Would America like an inverse domination, if the boot were on the other foot? No, this deal is a frightful mistake—and its full repercussions even yet cannot be foreseen. Certain it is that it will cost America millions, for this, or any other Government, will not take such a move lying down. All this sanctimonious blah about control remaining British deceives no one. . . .

"This deal is bad, decidedly so, but I don't think its protagonists could quite have envisaged where it would lead when they set out in an attempt to corner the British film market. Domination from any source is a bad thing! This week is fraught with big possibilities—anything may happen. Questions are being raised in Parliament. . . ."

* John Maxwell, chairman and managing director Associated British Picture Corporation controlling the important A.B.C. theatre circuit.

ISIDORE'S INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANT

"Will you please leave a slice for the poor English?"

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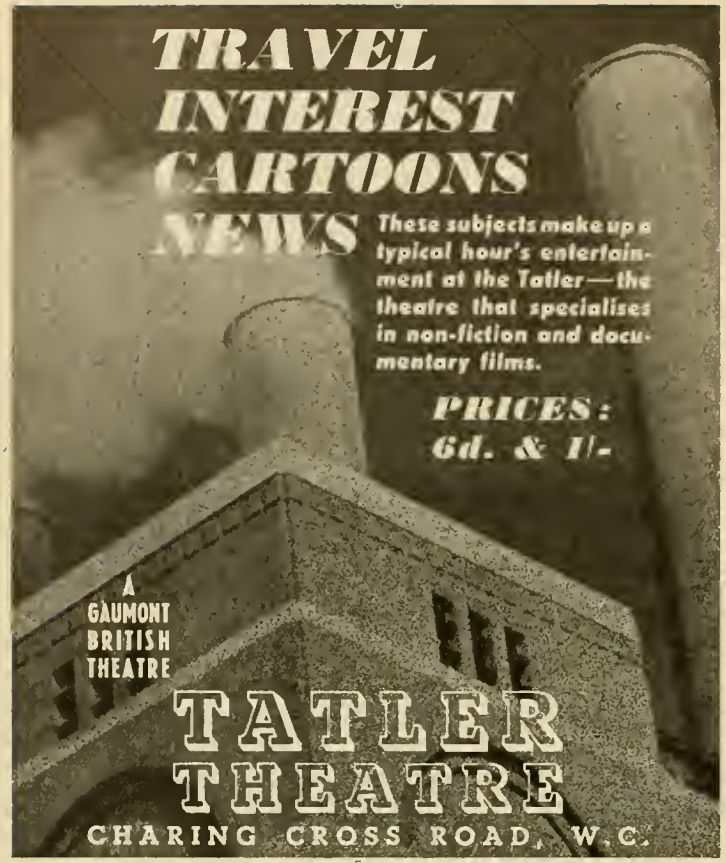

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Meet Oliver Bell
Institute's New Manager

PUKKA SAHIB OLIVER BELL stretched his huge frame and twitched the window curtains behind him.

It isn't really fair to poke fun at him, but he is nice enough not to mind. And he is so charming —so large—so genial—so eminently right—and so very Oxford.

I liked Mr. Bell. I liked his amiability, his lack of self-importance (in spite of that Oxford manner).

He doesn't try to impress you by such childish pomposities as keeping you waiting, before he is ready to see you.

However he may talk as though he were on the political platform, he does know what he is talking about—and he seems the sort of wallah (sorry—the sort of man) to get things done.

The sunlight streamed through the window and spotlit one side of the face of the new General Manager of the British Film Institute.

"The conservation of energy seems to be the most pressing immediate need of the British Film Institute," he said.

I blinked.

Oliver Bell

"The Institute has been accused of overtaxing its strength. But perhaps zeal hath outrun discretion."

Mr. Bell—he really does talk like this—put his fingertips togetber in the manner approved by the Conservative Office.

"My object," he said, "is to put first things first."

He paused, to let this sink in, then:

"We must form a proper picture of ourselves in the public mind. We need publicity,"

He stage-managed the curtains again, deftly.

"We must try and tone up our organisation," he went on, "and decentralise.

"Local branches must be increased—and they must learn to pull their weight.

"If they want a lecture in the provinces or a demonstration on some technical or educational aspect of the cinema, they must be able to go to their own expert and not depend on me or my assistant to come down and give it.

"You see, the trouble is we've been trying to do too much—that's what I meant by conserving our energy—we must concentrate on fewer things.

"Children, for instance. Do you realise," Mr. Bell addressed an imaginary audience, "that there are between 5 and 6 million children between the ages of 5 and 10?

"This seems a very large constituency to have been left unorganised for so long.

"I have in mind the calling of a really representative Conference to discuss the 'Child and the Cinema'—more objectively and realistically than it has ever been done.

"Children's educational entertainment needs organising, and it can only be done by co-operation between exhibitors and educational authorities.

"You know," said Oliver Bell, with a twinkle, "my ideas follow quite closely those suggested in a recent issue of *W.F.N.*

"My colleague and technical adviser, Mr. Waley, is working on a series of proposals to organise technical courses on projection for our members and for teachers.

"Then, of course, there's our routine work, the Film Library, with the storing of historical treasures—I mean historical from the point of view of the cinema art and industry—such as a newsreel of the early 1900's—both that side of it and the lending out of films to Societies.

"But our real function," Mr. Bell said, "is to be a buffer. If there is a grievance—if two representative branches of the industry start—er—slanging each other—we call a conference and say—'What about it, chaps?—let's smooth things over and find a common denominator.'

"No—we've no power—we're not a Government office—we're a—er—buffer."

I told Mr. Bell I could imagine him as a Minister of Films, without portfolio.

He grinned.

Asked about his qualifications for the post of General Manager, Mr. Bell shrugged—I drew this miniature 'Who's Who' from him:

O.U.D.S.—secretary. Six years producing amateur theatrical shows—"hence, you see," he said, "some knowledge of the technique of Drama."

League of Nations—prepared one of the many scenarios for a 'League' Film—to show the world the work of the League.

Attached to International Film Institute at Rome.

Parliamentary press work—parliamentary journalism——.

You can see he has administrative capacity, international knowledge—and a valuable experience of conferences.

"Tell me," I said rudely, "how did you get the job?"

Mr. Bell cocked his bowler hat at an angle as he held open the door for me.

"Oh—it—er—turned up, you know. *Tempora mutantur*——"

"And all that criticism that the Institute has come in for——" I murmured——"that difficult time it has gone through?"

"My lips are sealed." No, Mr. Bell did not actually say that. I must have imagined it. D.M.

Meetings and Acquaintances

MICKY BALCON gets the *Film Weekly* award for the production of *Thirty-nine Steps* and everyone is pleased. When the cavalcade of alien and highly decorative productions have all rode out of town and the soldiers at the Big Gate stand to a final and Royal salute, Balcon will still be around. At not quite forty he is still diffident, a little worried and not as tough as Gaumont-British and Gainsborough should have made him. For that, as well as for other reasons, he commands widespread affection throughout the film world. One day *W.F.N.* will award an even sweller prize than its respected contemporary the *Film Weekly*. That also we shall gladly present to Micky Balcon.

FRANK BADGLEY, in from Canada to shoot the Vimy ceremonial for the Canadian Government, is head of Canada's official Motion Picture Bureau. Has produced hundreds of films describing Canadian scenery and sport, and by a gift of a large quantity of his Dominion films to the E.M.B. was the real founder of the Empire Library. The thousands of teachers throughout the country who have benefited will salute the mention of his name. Badgley is a genius in contacts, knows everybody, and gets everything he wants. In a country where hospitality is a vice, will turn out any town east or west of Ottawa, to amuse the wandering stranger. Badgley plans a new series of films on Canada's interests. At long last—he promises—we are to have a film on the Canadian prairie.

RENE MAGRITTE, Belgian painter, whose works were one of the major sensations of the Surrealist Exhibition, lives in the suburbs of Brussels. On the walls of his small, typically bourgeois suburban house nightmarish, brilliantly painted canvases stare down on Saturday evening reunions of the Belgian surrealist group. His wife, dark and charming, hands out coffee. She also acts as model. Magritte plans to make surrealist films, and has already experimented on substandard film.

PROFESSOR DODDS, one of the principal figures in the Federation movement of the Film Societies, has been appointed to the Regius Professorship of Greek at Oxford, in succession to Sir Gilbert Murray. It is heard that exception to the appointment has been taken in some quarters at Oxford on the grounds that Professor Dodds was a conscientious objector and holds "advanced Left-wing views."

SZEGEDI SZUTS is back in town. Two years ago he brought to London from Hungary a sound-film cartoon about birds, which offended the Censor. He had to remove a long shot of a bird's bedroom because of the crockery under the bed. Next day he saw one of the early coloured Silly Symphonies at the Carlton, in which the air was full of winged bed-pans, flying in airforce formation. All this discouraged him, but Time the Healer has brought him back, with the complete plans for a new cartoon film in his suitcase. He may be a Hungarian, but he does have talent.

EDITORIAL

The Trade and Public Relations

A COMMITTEE of five men and one woman is taking evidence from the representatives of the British film trade. When they have heard what producers, renters and exhibitors have to say, they will advise the Government what to do with the Cinematograph Act. They will, not improbably, give continued protection to British films by making a proportion of British films compulsory in the theatres.

What we find most interesting, however, is the spirit in which some of the evidence has been laid. The representatives of the film trade have not covered themselves with honour. Question and answer have brought into the glare of public knowledge some of the most disagreeable elements in the film trade: its cut-throat money-grubbing, its ill-mannered greed, its shameless disregard of national duty.

We mention no names, for those who read the published blue books may discover them for themselves. But we hope the men responsible for our films will take warning from the performance. The vicious pursuit of profits and the defiance of ordinary social considerations may one day suggest a purge on German lines—and heaven keep us from that! An industry so intimately related to the public welfare and so deeply responsible to the public should, in self defence, keep its people in order and give evidence of a better spirit.

We suggest that the film industry follow the lead of the B.B.C. and create forthwith a Public Relations department. There is a great deal of goodwill in the film industry, lost now in the yelling bazaars of racketeering and promotion. It must be given its voice if the industry is at last to graduate from the gutter into the higher counsels of statesmanship.

Grave News for Educationists

THE SALE to America of a substantial interest in Gaumont-British is news of grave importance to educationists. At present the Gaumont-British group maintains Gaumont-British Instructional, our chief educational film unit. Its existence naturally depends on the high policies prevailing at Film House. Any change of policy which may result from American control must influence the experiments which Mr. Bruce Woolfe and Miss Field are carrying out in the provision of instructional films to schools.

We make no apology for drawing early attention to a matter of national importance. The records of American film companies in this country are well known. There has been no sign that the Imperialist film policy of America in these backward islands has been other than blatantly commercial. We fear their interest in the education of the natives may be slight.

If a sellout to America means a threat to the valuable work which Mr. Bruce Woolfe is doing, educationists may find it reasonable to petition the government to prevent a scandal.

The situation provides bitter comment on the haphazard attitude of the Board of Education to this growing branch of educational work. In the person of the late Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. Ramsbotham, it has, in pious platitudes, added its blessing to the work of others.

But the fact of the matter is that the existence of the educational film now depends on the goodwill of one man, Isidore Ostrer, and is subject to every stray wind of financial manipulation. The forces of education must see to it that this situation is not prolonged.

Discipline at the B.B.C.

WAS THERE ever such cockalorum as now attends our public criticism of the B.B.C.? Like young ratters, the boys of the radio pages squeal round the local haystack, but more in hope than discovery. In the House of Commons, members, all confused, are not quite sure at what point Reith's discipline finishes and Fascism begins.

Our sophisticated readers will not, we hope, be entangled by the sillier criticisms. Much of the present noise over the B.B.C. emanates from the warring sections of the B.B.C. itself. The public prints are being used, very unfortunately, to promote sectional interests.

The libertarians and sentimentalists are all for preventing what they describe as "dictatorship" and the "coercion of staff." We ask them to consider the primary necessity of discipline in an organisation like the B.B.C.

Associated as we are with creative work of many kinds and devoted as we are, first and last, to the interests of creative workers, it may seem unusual that *W.F.N.* should take this stand. But anyone who considers the conditions under which films and broadcasts are made, will realise that the old personal attitude of the painter to his canvas and the poet to his pen, can no longer apply. We serve wide audiences and have a duty to these audiences. We work necessarily in teams or units, and loyalty and understanding within the group are vital to good work. However hard the saying may be, we stand for discipline at the B.B.C. and hope that no libertarian whimpering will be allowed to damage its efficiency.

But on a further point we differ widely from the B.B.C. We do not conceive of that efficiency as the efficiency of a machine. We conceive of it as the efficiency of a living organism in which freedom and rule are not mutually exclusive.

It will be a strange result if we secure to our B.B.C. men the right to commit adultery and forget to secure them the right of experiment, the right of trial and error and, in a far more important sphere, the right to create.

We are disappointed that

The quality of continental films in the specialised cinemas is falling so low.

There is still no sign of the development of a two-reel comedy team in Britain.

W. C. Fields has not yet recovered from his illness.

Racketeering on personal publicity is on the up-grade.

world FILM news

AUGUST 1936

Editor: MARION A. GRIERSON

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THE CHILL HAND OF CENSORSHIP

"We cannot allow ourselves to be ruled by a gang of mystery men," said H. G. Wells when the Peace Film was stopped. Here is the first public account of our mystery men: who they are and how they work. Meet the British Board of Film Censors.

Editorials

There has been a certain tendency of late to err on the side of over-caution and sometimes of inconsistency. In the recent case, for instance, of *Secret Agent*, the Censor objected to the climax of the film, in which a murder was committed. Several alternative endings were "shot," and when the film was shown in London a few weeks ago the murder was perpetrated in a manner which was true neither to the character of the murderer nor to the atmosphere of the film. Since then *Secret Agent* has been generally released throughout the country with the original ending and the Censor's blessing. Second thoughts are notoriously best; but in cases of this kind film-producers have a right to demand that the Board of Censors should think a little more quickly.—*The Times*, June 25th, 1936.

Lord Tyrrell, the Film Censor, will scarcely get many intelligent observers to agree with his view, expressed to the film exhibitors' conference at Eastbourne yesterday, that to-day's cinema needs continued repression of controversy in order to stave off disaster.—*Manchester Guardian*, June 25th, 1936.

Perhaps a younger and more quick-witted mind is needed for the post.—*The Star*, June 25th, 1936.

Is it only on the stage and in literature that we are to be allowed to have discussion of the great issues that affect the living together of men and women in community life? Is the cinema to have no Galsworthy or Shaw or Wells?—*Newcastle Evening Chronicle*, July 3rd, 1936.

Lord Tyrrell has awakened suddenly to the fact that the censor's job is not what he may have been at first inclined to think —a quiet finale to a distinguished career. Jerked to his feet by the storm over the peace film, he is opening out on what may prove to be the most difficult passage of his public service. To do him justice he speaks as though he realised the responsibility of his position. There have been new and welcome signs of the higher statesmanship at the censor office. Wardour Street has generously acknowledged them. It will register genuine pleasure if Lord Tyrrell turns out to be an active reconstructor of the whole censor position. *W.F.N.*

PASS ANY DAY down Wardour Street, and you will pass down a street bright with the colour of showmanship. Banners stream down from the roof-tops to end just above your head, gaily painted cut-outs decorate the shop windows, while the shining mechanism of brand new projectors gleams at you from the show-rooms. The street is alive.

Turn then into a certain doorway and begin to climb the cold stone stairs before you. The brilliance of the street below falls away. The atmosphere becomes obscure. You are oppressed with a sense of dank darkness. A ghostly figure peers at you from a door, flits across a landing, and is gone. Mystery and uneasiness prevail. The friendly hum of Wardour Street traffic fades to silence. You are on the threshold of the offices of the British Board of Film Censors.

And the approach to their premises is strangely symbolic of the activities of the Board. Their comings and goings are shrouded in a nimbus of obscurity. Their names are published in the Kine Year Book, but their identities and origins are veiled. They move in a mysterious way their wonders to perform.

And yet this shadow cabinet of elderly men and women has struck widespread and paralysing inhibitions into the heart of the film industry. Script conferences in the studios debate their reaction to dialogue; directors on the floor are pulled up short in rehearsal by the whispered warning of "censor"; even the hard-boiled executives of Wardour Street shake anxious heads over action and gesture which approaches the borderline of the Board's sacred "categories." There are stories of inconsistency and misjudgment. Yet at the request to bring complaint and grievance into the open, deep calls hush to deep, the stories temporarily cease to circulate and an uncomfortable silence prevails until the menace of publicity is past. In plain words, Wardour Street is scared stiff of the Censor.

It is time to tear away the obscurity and the fear with which the operations of the censor-board are surrounded, and to reveal it for what it is—a body throttling a young and vital medium with a set of standards drawn from an age of water-colours and draped piano-legs.

The B.B.F.C. is appointed by the Kinematograph Renters' Society and the Kinematograph Manufacturers' Association. Its president must be approved by the Home Office. It has no official standing whatever such as that held by the Lord Chamberlain. It is backed by no higher authority, and a clause in the contract signed by the submitter of a film expressly forbids him to seek redress elsewhere should the Board reject his film.

Its limits are set by its own discretion. Yet its constitution involves no loyalty except to the bodies who elect and pay its members. It is responsible neither to the government nor to the public.

Who then are the men who wield this supreme power over every film of importance shown in Great Britain, and who are answerable for their actions to no one in particular? We will not delve into the past, except to mention two ex-presidents, Mr. T. P. O'Connor and Mr. Edward Shortt, K.C. Mr. O'Connor was paralysed from the waist down during the last years of his presidency, and throughout the whole of this later period saw two films, "Mother" and "Martin Luther." Mr. Shortt expired at over eighty, censoring films to the last.

The present staff includes the following persons :—

PRESIDENT: LORD TYRRELL OF AVON. He will shortly be seventy. He has enjoyed a distinguished diplomatic career. He was for eight years private secretary to Sir Edward Grey. He prepared the British case at the Peace Conference and was Minister Plenipotentiary at Versailles. From 1928 to 1934 he was British Ambassador in Paris.

Lord Tyrrell is a Roman Catholic. Concerning his appointment as Film Censor the *Daily Express* wrote: "The fact that he is a member of the Roman Catholic Church is significant. The recent purity campaign which swept the studios of Hollywood and changed the whole trend of film-making throughout the world was initiated by the Vatican."

VICE-PRESIDENT: COLONEL JOHN CONNOR HANNA, D.S.O. Col. Hanna is approximately 65. He served with distinction during the War, gained the Croix de Guerre, and was three times mentioned in dispatches. He was a member of the Expeditionary Force to Ireland during the "Troubles" in that country in 1918. His club is the Army and Navy.

SECRETARY: MR. J. BROOKE WILKINSON. His age is not known, but he has boasted of his acquaintance with John Ruskin (died 1900). His salary is, we hear, £1,500 a year, and he is also the salaried secretary of the Kinematograph Manufacturers' Association.

Mr. Wilkinson has served the Censor Board for many years. Until quite recently it was known that he suffered from serious eye trouble. This minor drawback is, however, compensated for by his refusal to attend a performance of the London Film Society on the grounds that it took place on Sunday.

MAJOR HARDING DE FONBLANQUE COX, LL.B. This picturesque figure, suffering on his own admission from "a peculiar form of lethargica" is a recent appointment to the Board at the age of 81. "Who's Who" records that Major Cox's recreations include hunting, coursing, angling, shooting, race-riding and sculling; that he is an ex-M.F.H. of two packs; that he has won many shooting trophies; that he was specially invited by the Austrian Government to inspect and report on the fisheries of Bosnia and Herzgovina in 1897; that he is a judge at the Crystal Palace, Birmingham, Cruft's, and all principal dog shows and that he is a life member of the Garrick and

Miss Rosamund Smith

Brooke Wilkinson

Lord Tyrrell

"It is Impertinent to take our Likenesses" (Brooke Wilkinson)

Leander Clubs. His Publications include *Coursing, Chasing and Racing, A Sportsman at Large, Yarns without Yawns, Fugleman the Foxhound, Dogs, Dogs and I, Dogs of Today*. He was at one time Kennel Editor of the *Illustrated and Sporting Dramatic News*. His musical publications include *Air Marshal* (March), *United Empire* (March), *For King and Country* (Grand March), and *Wong* (Chinese Patrol). He is the originator of a scheme, submitted to the Home Office in 1918, for the gradual extermination of mongrels. *The Daily Express* recently reported him as saying "The mongrel has no right to be born. He is an offence to public decency."

Major Cox is now an umpire of public decency on the screen. Plentiful references to his excellence as a judge of dogs (with a penchant for patriotic music) indeed exist; but no reference to his special competence as a judge of films can be traced.

Miss Myson. This Miss Myson is a living example of the obscurity with which the Board is surrounded. Wardour Street, gloomily conscious of her existence, has dubbed her "the old woman." Beyond that she is a complete enigma.

From this catalogue of a selection from the Board's staff certain illluminating facts emerge. We will examine these facts, bearing in mind that these persons, together with their colleagues, enjoy supreme power over every important film to be shown on the British screens.

1. The combined ages of five of them alone must total over three hundred years. At least three are long past the age at which many professional men are required to retire. Yet these persons whose acquisitive years were spent in the horse age have somehow found authority over an industry built on young ideas and dependent for its vitality on the use of machinery and a modern creative outlook.

2. Three of them are recruited from the Army and the Foreign Office. They bear an unmistakable social stamp. They are drawn from a small and exclusive class. One of them is a Roman Catholic. Their whole training, conscious and subconscious, represents a limitation, when it is considered that the cinema's vast audiences comprise citizens of every social, political and religious denomination in the country.

3. Though mystery surrounds the achievements of the Board's staff in cultural spheres, one point appears to emerge. The Board as a whole boasts relatively few of the accepted insignia of learning. Glance at the records of members of the film industry and you will find a formidable array of academic distinction. But it seems that in the one branch of the film trade where powers of social interpretation are of first importance there is not, as far as can be ascertained, a single medical or psychological degree or any considerable body of experience which would appear to be particularly adapted to the social problems of cinema. And yet these people are daily concerned not only with expert instructional films, but with the psychological emotions and the physical reactions of millions.

We will now examine the B.B.F.C. at work as a body and glance at some of the more significant inconsistencies it has managed to achieve.

It has already been made clear that the Board has no responsibility save to the Trade. The Government is in the fortunate position of being able to dissociate itself from the Censor's decisions at a moment's notice. There is no obligation to refer to public opinion. Its only commission is, broadly, to safeguard the interests of the Trade. It is wonderfully free from departmental and official restrictions and is in a position to use this freedom to co-operate with creative men in an intelligent development of cinema. Lord Tyrrell even raised hopes of such a co-operation by saying that "the same licence should be granted to the cinema industry as is granted to other forms of dramatic art." But he straightway added "always bearing in mind the crucial fact that the cinema caters for millions, whereas all other forms of art cater for thousands." This statement, to put it politely, stinks of something particularly abhorrent to the decent British citizen—"one law for the rich and another for the poor." It is by no means the kind of statement Lord Tyrrell should sponsor.

Here are just two examples of the "prohibited categories," and of their application to actual cases.

1. It is prohibited to show men and women in bed together. By what right does the censor imply 'prurient' interpretation of each and every of such scenes? And yet when a case arises of the very 'prurience' which he wishes to ban, this same censor approves it. In the film *State Fair* the younger son is seen in shadowgraph in bed with a woman (not his wife). By what irresponsibility is licence of this kind extended to one film and not another?

2. It is prohibited to show themes likely to wound the just susceptibilities of a friendly nation. An elastic category, and the elasticity has been turned to account. A short film was made calling attention to the continued imprisonment in Germany of Thaelmann without a charge. It was called *Free Thaelmann*. The censor first pointed out that the film came within another category forbidding the depiction of the lives of notorious criminals. For, argued the censor, since Thaelmann has been long in prison, he must be a criminal. The publisher replied that Thaelmann had been in gaol for three years without trial, whereat the censor proudly announced that such a thing could not happen in a civilised country, and banned the film as being "unfriendly to Germany." Shades of Morton's Fork!

The feelings of the men who are compelled to deal with this kind of difficulty may be imagined. But the normal "troubles with the censor," the hindrance, the obstruction, the wearisome moralising, the eternal reminders that pregnant women may miscarry when subjected to shock, are not the only matters that bother the Wardour Street men. It is commonly said that those who are prepared to raise hell over what they consider an unjust decision can get away with far more than, for instance, the representatives of foreign

These photographs were taken outside the Censor's Office. The Board refused to identify them. Are they Censors?

firms who are not conversant with the methods of the Board. It is even maintained that one American firm gets away with "almost anything," while two of its rivals have constant difficulty. Such feeling does not add to the dignity of the Board.

Let us now turn to what is possibly the most notorious of the Board's actions, and study the facts in some detail. When the present re-armament programme was announced, a group of film-workers pooled their resources and made a three-minute film pleading for peace. On March 27th of this year the film was sent to the censor for the usual examination. On April 3rd the producers were notified in writing that the Board had taken exception to the film, but that the secretary would be pleased to discuss the matter with them.

At the subsequent interview the producers' representative was told that exception had been taken on the grounds first that the film was controversial, and second that it had been suggested that certain of the war scenes in the film were the property of the War Office. The secretary intimated his intention of submitting the film to the War Office in order to ascertain whether this material was or was not its property.

Three days later the producers' representative again interviewed the secretary of the Board. It was then stated that no decision had been reached, but that the film was being submitted to the War Office. If the War Office gave permission for its material to be used, or, if the War Office could say that the scenes in question were not its property, then the Board would consider granting it a certificate. This procedure, it was stated, might take some time. The secretary was thereupon informed that the producers were anxious to release the film as soon as possible owing to its topicality (the White Paper on armaments had recently appeared). Mr. Wilkinson expressed incredulous surprise that there should be "any hurry over a short film."

Two interesting points arise from these interviews. In concerning itself with the origin of the material contained in the film the Board

* * *

"The ways of the censor are indeed inscrutable."—Lord Cecil.

* * *

appointed itself guardian of copyright. There is no particular reason why it should not do so, since by its constitution it can do almost anything it likes. But it is highly doubtful whether there is a single occasion on record prior to this case on which the censor has interested himself in film copyright. An authority on the subject has recently made the illuminating remark that if the B.B.F.C. considered the checking of copyright as one of its duties it would need a permanent staff of some five hundred persons to deal with musical questions alone. Why then this sudden and lively concern for other people's copyright? Second point; it is a fact, well known by all conversant with such matters, that questions of Crown copyright are the business of the Controller of the Stationery Office. Mr. Wilkinson, with his years of experience of the film industry, must have known this; yet he stated that he was referring the film to the *War Office* to get the copyright question settled. Why did he make this statement, when it afterwards transpired that the film was never seen by the War Office at all?

On the morning of April 7th the producers, dissatisfied with their treatment at the hands of the censor, informed the Press of the situation. The next morning, April 8th, the Press informed the country. At a few minutes before noon on this same day (April 8th) a reporter on the staff of a respected provincial newspaper spoke to one of the producers. The Board's secretary, he said, had just previously told him by 'phone that a certificate for the Peace Film was at that moment being written out. The producers, however, were not informed by the Board of the granting of the certificate until a 'phone message came through from the B.B.F.C. during the afternoon to tell them that the certificate was waiting at the Board's office should they care to call for it.

Now Lord Tyrrell said in his speech at the June conference of the C.E.A.: "As a matter of fact the certificate was issued for the film the day before the attacks were made in the Press." The Press was told the story on April 7th. The certificate was given to the producers on April 8th, and according to the Board's secretary was also written out on April 8th. What is the explanation?

A.C.T. Resolution

Resolution passed unanimously by the General Council of the Association of Cine-Technicians following Lord Tyrrell's speech at the June conference of the C.E.A.:

"That the Council of the Association of Cine-Technicians takes grave exception to the views expressed by Lord Tyrrell, President of the British Board of Film Censors, to the conference of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association as reported in the Press. The council holds no brief for any particular political belief whatsoever, but it must none the less sternly resist any tendency to deprive those working in the field of cinematography of the right which they should enjoy as British citizens, the right of expression in their chosen field of any view not inconsistent with the law. The attempt to limit the function of cinematography exclusively to entertainment is outside the province and duties of censorship; if successful, it will establish the cinema, *per se*, as inferior in social value to literature and the other arts and thereby degrade the status of the technicians who devote their lives to it.

"The elimination from cinematograph subject material of every controversial question deprives the cinema of the possibility of playing any useful part in the life of the nation, and will have the effect of holding it permanently at that 'nickel-odeon' level from which the skill of generations of technicians has raised it to the heights of an art unlimited in potentiality. The underlying assumption that British audiences are incapable of witnessing material with which they disagree without riot is, further, an insult to the British people which, as citizens, the council must strongly repudiate."

THE CENSORS: A FORCE FOR GOOD?

This article is contributed by a prominent Wardour Street personality. "W.F.N." is informed that it expresses the views of many film people who are prevented, for obvious reasons, from associating their names with criticism of a Censor Board that is supported by their own organisations.

IS THE PRESENT system of film censorship a good one?

That is the sort of question that seemingly intelligent people will make a serious attempt to answer with a plain "yes" or "no."

Somebody recently published this little problem:

"*In a certain village, the local barber shaved all of those individuals, and only those individuals, that did not shave themselves. Did he shave himself?*"

After you have pondered over that puzzle for a few minutes, you will come to the conclusion that there is a catch in it. Of course there is. The catch is in the original proposition, which is self-contradictory. But notice, that had the postulate been advanced without being followed by the question, you would have been prepared to accept it without comment. Only when a question arises is the fallacy exposed.

The present system of film censorship was instituted by the Trade when it was found that a number of exhibitors were making money by showing the public what a large section of the public most wanted to see, namely, naughty pictures. The people, having been sex-starved from their youth up (thanks to that system of inhibitions collectively known as Victorianism) found in the new moving pictures a method of psychic gratification not until then within reach.

The Trade's objection to this was not at all a moral one: it was purely commercial. The pictures were getting a bad name. Cautious mammas were forbidding their daughters to look at them. The box office was menaced.

In a spirit of self-protection, the Trade set up a voluntary censorship.

That censorship, contrary to the opinion of the critics, carried out its job with the most extreme efficiency. The censors recognised at the outset that to earn their money they must be effective. They made themselves effective by announcing their existence to the licensing authorities, and persuading those authorities that they—the Censors—were a Force for Good.

Potent word! The licensing authorities, armed with full powers to close any cinema down and deprive the proprietor of his livelihood, accepted the censorship with the greatest readiness. Many of them made it a licence condition that no film might be shown unless it carried the censors' certificate, or at least had the special permission of the Authority.

The censors, financially supported by the Trade and presumably servants of the Trade, were thus put in the powerful position of masters. It was true the Trade paid them; but the licensing authorities gave them the power; and if it ever came to a show-down, the Trade would find them in a formidable position.

Fortunately, that is the last thing in the minds of the Trade, for the reason that the censors are excellent for their job. They were employed to protect the Trade from box-office loss; and they carry out their work with the utmost singleness of purpose.

The result is, that nothing reaches the screen which can by any stretch of the imagination be expected to give offence to anybody. Mothers may allow their daughters to visit the cinemas regularly, with complete assurance that said daughters will see nothing at all that can possibly do them any harm. Daughters can allow their mothers the same freedom, knowing that any stray *double entendres* that haply may have escaped the keen ears of the censors will be above their heads. It is all very pleasant.

And now to look for a moment at the simple philosophy by which so much good work is guided to its triumphant conclusion. "*Not to give offence*": that is the law.

And a very good, courteous, middle-class-parlour law it is. But stay a moment! What is it, in fact, that can or might give offence?

The statement of any idea which runs counter to ideas we have hitherto held. The presentation of any condition not harmonious with the conditions we have learned to accept as right and proper.

These are the things that give offence. If I am a Conservative, and a Socialist canvasser calls on me just before an election, it offends me, and I have hard work to prevent myself showing it: the man has insulted my intelligence. If I happen to be a Wearer of Symbolic Underlinen, I shall probably get out my rubber truncheon, or make a mental note of the man's address for future reference at a time when the rubber truncheon shall have become an accepted institution. No man, I should tell myself, should be allowed to offer his insulting creed with impunity.

As a devout Catholic, I am insulted when an agnostic tells me that transubstantiation is either nonsense or cannibalism. As a good Victorian, I am insulted when an exhibitionist makes a public parade of urinating. In fact, they call it "insulting behaviour" when in the law courts.

As a firm believer in Astrology, naturally I should be insulted by the narrow-minded doubts of the mathematician. Twenty-five years ago I was insulted by the blasphemous aeroplane ("if God had wanted man to fly, He would have given him wings"); and if I am not insulted by the fact of wireless it must be because the effect of so many subsequent inventions have made me a little senile. New ideas of any sort are always insulting to somebody; and the nearer the truth they happen to be, the more insulting they become.

It naturally follows that the fifteen million fans who make twenty million visits each week to the cinemas, cannot be kept from insult except by the process of purging the screen of every idea whatever. We know that if you express a new idea, somebody is bound to be offended; consequently the censor is happiest with those films that haven't a single new idea from one end to the other.

The films that try to say something, on the contrary, give him a headache. He sees the cloven hoof of controversy.

Consequently, we find films like the 300-foot peace film held up and in grave danger of being banned altogether. The censor's explanation that the delay in certification was due to some doubt about copyright is merely ridiculous. Far better for the censor to have said frankly: "The film was controversial: it would have offended the armament manufacturers."

The actual composition of the Board of Censors has been criticised because of the considerable age of the examiners. This is an absurd attitude. The older the examiners, the more certain are they to recognise a new idea the moment it appears on the screen. Show them anything which is not strictly in accordance with accepted traditions and they are instantly alert.

It is not to be wondered at that after so long this attitude of "avoid controversy" should have become accepted as the "right and proper" attitude. It is not really surprising therefore that a couple of years ago, when the Trade was campaigning against the entertainment tax, a local licensing authority should have made an unforeseen decision: The Trade had prepared some short films appealing to the public to support the campaign for cheaper seats. *One County Council notified the licencees that these films were not to be shown.*

That was a direct result of the training of the Trade's "non-controversial" system of censorship.

It is not to be thought that this system eliminates propaganda from the screen altogether. By no means. A film is non-controversial provided it accepts the existing standards. Thus, capitalism, marriage-before-babies, keeping on the left side of the street, crossing the fingers when passing under ladders, religion according to the Book of Common Prayer, the heroic side of a war of aggression, and the opinions of the Conservative Member in the latest by-election are all right and proper subjects for the screen. . . .

. . . An enormous up-bolstering of the crazy, fantastic, complex nightmare of contradictory politics, dark-age religion, snobbery, superstition, greed, and race prejudice which constitutes our present civilisation, and distinguishes that noble creature Man from those lowly and rather smelly beings, the Beasts of the Field.

By so doing, the system of censorship ensures the Trade an average weekly attendance of nearly twenty million.

And after that, you are thoughtless enough to ask "Is the present system a good one?"

English films are content to skim the surface of English life. I do not know whether this comes from fear of the Censor or from a temporary lack of courage and enterprise on the part of the producers, who feel less sure of themselves than the old hands in Hollywood.

But I wish one of them would come out with something hot and strong on the radical side (if he wants my assistance he can have it), so that we could make a test case of it with the Censor. It is monstrous that I should be allowed to print and broadcast opinions that must not find any expression in films, and that picture theatres, where most of our people go for their entertainment, should continue to be the sacred and not-to-be-defiled temples of the established order of loot and mass murder.—J. B. Priestley in the *Star*, July 3rd, 1936.

LOUIS GOLDING
discusses novel and film technique

Louis Golding, novelist, boxing-fan and connoiseur of the arts, has just returned from Hollywood.

Golding is unique in that he is the only novelist who takes boxing really seriously. He writes up big fights for the "Star."

He is keenly interested in the problems of film-making and his novel, *Magnolia Street*, has been acquired by Gaumont-British.

Louis Golding strides from corner to corner of his workroom. For the moment it is the ring, and the fight is billed Novel *v.* Film. Uninvited I take the role of referee, but Golding will have none of it. I take a ring-side seat, and the bell rings.

First round:

"The writer whose treatment of Character and situation is filmic is lucky. Take Tom Jones as an example of a good novel and a bad scenario, or any of Marcel Proust's novels. While Marcel Proust's novels are quite the worst from a film point of view, Ben Hecht's would be the best. All the rest of us lie between.

"David Selznick told me that Ben Hecht submitted a script written overnight and it required no alteration whatever. To his knoweldge this has been the only phenomenon of its kind in Hollywood.

"A new sort of novel may be created by novelists whose gifts are of the nature of Ben Hecht's. These novels would be at the same time readable and feasible as scenarios. It is unlikely that this sort of novel should supplant the old because the old novel will continue to satisfy a demand that cannot be satisfied by the screen.

* * *

Second round:

"Two things the novel can do and the cinema cannot:

(1) The novel can describe slow becomings and slow ceasings. It is interested in processes. Both film and the drama are interested in results.

(2) Those things most important to a novel are, so to speak, "on stage." In drama and the film these things are "off stage."

"My sort of novels, for example *The Miracle Boy* and *Five Silver Daughters*, are interested in the influence of background on the actors whether it be landscape or industry. In film the nearest approach to dealing with a slow development of this kind has been in the early Russian films and in some of the present documentaries. But films cannot do this so well; they must be primarily interested in *results*. In *Drifters* the adjustment of the actors to a storm is shown. A novel would not only show this but would show the character development in the actors which has led to that particular form of adjustment.

* * *

Third round:

"The novelist can learn a great deal from the economy of film dialogue, and economy is a supreme virtue. I don't mean that good film dialogue will be good novel dialogue. In a novel that whole swing and tempo is dependent on the use of dialogue, but in film, dialogue belongs *to the instant*. Witness the use of wisecracks in the American film. (In the English film one feels the lack of efficient wisecracks, and when they do make the attempt the results are so lamentable that one shudders with shame.)

"The good novelist's instinctive sense of character should be useful to film, especially as he has centuries of experience behind him. But even in the best films, characters are liable to behave in a way which to the novelist is preposterous. The novelist, too, can produce an infinite diversity of character where the film cannot. The star system tends to flatten out the character to fit a mould: whether it be the mould of a Spencer Tracy or a Sylvia Sydney. The work of Paul Muni is an exception, for Muni's character changes completely with every film: he is always completely himself."

The fourth bell had rung but Golding paid no attention. Novel and Film retired to their corners. Golding is an ardent Muni fan and, once on the subject, he refused to be side-tracked.

Of Muni he writes in *Photoplay:*

"I think the greatness of Muni belongs primarily to himself; no director, no scenarist, no cameraman, no soundman has had very much to do with it. It consists of a certain iron integrity combined with a certain delicate sensitiveness which can't be built up from outside. It must develop from within. . . . Muni said that he could not work outside the limits of a fiery an almost tough, realism. 'I like something I can get my teeth into,' he said, 'something I can get hold of and pull at with all ten fingers till the jaw stiffens and the tendons stand out on my forehead.'

"That, of course, is the sort of part he has done incomparably well in *Scarface* and *Black Fury* and *I Was a Fugitive from a Chain-Gang*. But I am quite certain he is setting his limitations too close. He has already shown what suavity and subtlety he is capable of, in the *Life of Louis Pasteur*, though even there he is still acting within the framework of a certain intellectual realism. I should like to see him take wings into the world of imagination, to enter into the ether till now occupied almost exclusively by actors like Conrad Veidt, Charles Laughton and Werner Krauss."

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DENIS MYERS meets MR. MESSEL

IN A WHITEWASHED STUDIO off Knightsbridge lives a dangerous young man.

He smiles, but he is not amused. He hesitates, almost stammers as he speaks, but there is no indecision about what he thinks.

He has ideas—he is dangerous.

He is restless, he squats on the floor and then leaps up again, but there is repose in his mind.

He is no respecter of persons. Dukes, film stars, children, charwomen, are alike to him.

He is dangerous.

He has a charming and efficient secretary, and a charming (and efficient?) disarray in his studio. His masks, models and medieval designs mingle oddly with a modern cocktail cabinet, a 'precious' collection of bric-a-brac, a cluster of hot-house flowers—in a tin kitchen-jug.

He has been the innocent cause of friction in Hollywood, and the not-so-innocent power that is influencing autumn fashions in two continents.

A dangerous young man—Oliver Messel.

He likes Hollywood. He likes the people, the sun, the go-getting air about the place, the atmosphere of intrigue.

An anachronism, Mr. Messel, with his medieval knowledge, his medieval designs, his medieval love of intrigue, and his frankly avowed liking for gangster films.

But his *Romeo and Juliet* dress designs have been aped by the fashion arbiters of the world for modern woman.

When he left Hollywood a newspaper 'splashed' him as a 'disillusioned Briton.'

Oliver Messel laughed. "Nothing of the sort," he told me. "We were all very friendly. I liked Hollywood. And Adrian was charming—in spite of——"

"A spot of bother?" I suggested. "Jealousy?"

Dangerous young men are wary.

"Nothing personal," said Oliver, smiling (dangerously). "But when I got there Adrian was away on holiday. As you know he does all the gowns for M.G.M. And when he came back and found I was doing the *Romeo and Juliet* designs, there was one of those Hollywood flare-ups.

"Cukor refused to carry on unless my contract was worked out. There was a danger of the whole production collapsing.

"And then—well, the trouble all faded out. Adrian did a little—I did a lot.

"But there are two things in the film that aren't mine, and I *would* like that made clear. The balcony scene, and Juliet's ballroom dress.

"They may be historically authentic, but they're not my conception. After all, Adrian is one artist—I am another. We have different conceptions."

Filmgoers will perhaps be able to judge for themselves where the artistic temperaments have clashed. They will not, however, have any grounds for complaint on a question of authenticity, for Messel spent over four months going round Italy, studying detail, atmosphere, delving into queer sources of information to get his background correct.

Then, soaked in the period, he deliberately forgot his knowledge, and made his drawings.

How peculiarly adaptable his art is to the screen will be seen in the film, for though the designs are in colour, the camera-shots bring out every gradation of tone, and it is, of course, not a colour film.

But Messel's colourings are so delicate, the drawings almost strike you as done in black and white.

Messel, costume designer for "Romeo and Juliet" says: "Adrian is one artist I am another"

Naturally this young man had something to say about colour.

"At present," he said, "colour films are only a medium for the crudest work. I'm glad *Romeo and Juliet* wasn't done in colour.

"Oleograph appeal," he argued, "is not worth cultivating."

"Do you think *Romeo and Juliet* is going to be a box-office success?" I asked.

"I do. It's got movement—romance—it's beautifully acted. Personally——" the smile broke out again—"I like gangster films, and continental ones."

Oliver sighed. "I wish someone would do for England what Rene Clair did for France," he said.

"He almost did it for Scotland, in *The Ghost Goes West*. But what a field there is in England—Limehouse, the slums—quaint rustic corners—not a medium for me, of course. I'd go and see the film though."

He got up from the divan with seventeen pink cushions on it. (I counted them.)

"Tell me," I said, "Did you find Hollywood as crude, as naïve as it's supposed to be?"

He shook his head. "It's just as intellectual as British filmland," he said, without a blush; "more so, perhaps. Of course, everyone talks nothing but films. It's on a different plane, a bit crazy.

"But I'll tell you one queer thing—in England the cameramen, technicians, executives on the sets, are mostly American—at any rate, they have American accents.

"In Hollywood they're nearly all English and Scottish. Prophets who have not honour in their own country. . . ."

As I shook hands with him beside the mantelpiece with a skull scrawled on it, Messel told me a word or two of his plans: he hopes to do a film for Reinhardt, hopes to go back to Hollywood—may go to Vienna—Germany.

HEDDA HOPPER
meets Mr. Myers

Hedda—great personality—and best dressed woman in Hollywood.

HEDDA HOPPER came out of the lift at the Savoy with a smile in her eyes—a smile in her voice—and the queerest hat I had ever seen. (*She* called it amusing.)

Hedda Hopper—best-dressed woman in Hollywood——

She had an electric vitality that set you tingling—and the only American accent that lends a charm to the English language.

She bought stamps—"Lucky Strikes"—tea—waved to a film director—compared the hotel lobby to Grand Central Station—reduced the head-waiter to servility—and introduced half-a-dozen people to each other—all in a breath—in that American tempo which, without being in itself breathless, leaves you gasping.

They call her "Everybody's pal" in Hollywood. Whether she's selling real estate—starring in radio, films or theatre—whether she's being as crazy as the film colony or as "county" as the City Fathers—everyone likes Hedda.

And to her schoolboy son's pals she is just "Bill's mother."

We exhausted English weather, our wonderful English policemen, our too-cute politicians. We came to films.

Hedda has no superiority complex about the Hollywood product. She adores British actors and actresses. (She thinks there is no one like Edith Evans—Laughton is a little god—Nova Pilbeam 'swell.")

"If they'd quicken up the tempo of British films," she told me, "they'd produce marvellous films.

"As it is—well, you *find* the stars—we *make* them."

"Laughton was grand in *Henry VIII*, but look what he's done since. Look at Merle Oberon. . . .

"You've not many good juveniles, though——

"But your English censorship——"

Hedda nearly grimaced.

"Oh yes—we've got Will Hays—and I had a story I was going to tell on Ruby Vallee's 'hook-up' cut—I'll tell it you in a minute—but the things you miss——

"Now you don't let Royalty be portrayed on stage or film," went on Hedda disgustedly. "And running in New York is *the* finest play—about your Queen Victoria—and you've got to go to America to see it!

"It was Mae West who put the censorship into the movies, you know," she added.

"But what really gets me about British films is, how you can make them pay," she said shrewdly.

"Do you mean they're so bad?"

"I should say not—don't get me wrong," protested Hedda. "But you turn out so few. You've the most marvellous studios, buildings and equipment—those I've seen—but you've got to turn out a lot of pictures like we do to make them pay.

"And you only do four or five a year. How is it going to pay dividends?"

I wondered, too.

"You keep stars waiting doing nothing on big salaries, too," she said. "Oh—I know Hollywood does the same, but look at the number of pictures we turn out.

"Yes, some *are* bad—that's the trouble of 'block booking'—the exhibitors have got to take them.

"There is a great regard for the British in Hollywood," Hedda told me.

"When your King George died, all the British actors wore black ties—the actresses went into mourning. And a good many Americans did likewise.

"Some were more British than the British," she chuckled.

English have a love for the stage, Hedda thinks, that will never die.

She has a tremendous admiration for the "Old Vic"—for Laughton in throwing up huge salaries to go back and perfect his art there.

"We have that love in America, too," she said, "and though Box Office is the prime factor everywhere, classics will always be staged and screened."

"And that old fetish of star names?"

Hedda sighed. "You've got to have 'em," she said.

"Of course there are the 'freak' successes. The 'Quins' film. . . . You heard Mrs. Pat Campbell's comment?

"When she heard the sum that 20th Century-Fox was paying to film those babes, Mrs. Pat exploded.

" 'What! All that money for a Canadian farmer's mistake!' she said, 'and there are hundreds of great artists starving to death in Hollywood.' "

"I'll tell you another story, too," said Hedda, "which will sum up Hollywood for you.

"Henri Bernstein, famous French playwright, was asked at a dinner if he could give in a few words his impressions of Hollywood.

" 'One word will do,' he said: 'fear.' "

"And that's true," said Hedda. "Everyone's ruled by fear. Directors are afraid they'll lose their jobs. Stars are afraid someone else will eclipse them, everyone's afraid of everyone else. . . .

"Of scandal, too. Why, if a man's seen out with a girl three times he's got to marry her!

"And people who call on others leave their cars around corners and in different streets so that they shan't be traced by their registration numbers.

"Some of the stars 'go simple' to escape attention.

"Hence Joan Crawford's all-white car—with 'fire-sign' (which gets you through anywhere)—white-liveried chauffeur—and Joan—in white.

"She didn't want to be noticed," said Hedda quietly.

"Afraid," I agreed.

There are other things stars are "afraid" of, too, in Hollywood. Those child stars.

"Shirley Temple, Hollywood's biggest money-maker," said Hedda, "is unspoilt but——feared.

"You see," she explained, "she knows her part after the first reading, and her very assurance dries-up the others. Then . . . she prompts them . . . and after two or three goes of that they're just all of a dither.

"But she's cute—and so is Jane Withers.

"Then there's the fear of being in a bad picture. You've no idea what tbat can do to a star.

"I was talking to a little Australian girl—she told me their favourite 'down under' was Norma Shearer."

"But what about Joan Crawford?" asked Hedda.

"Oh," said the girl, "we haven't been to see her since *Rain*."

"*Sic transit gloria stellae*," I said.

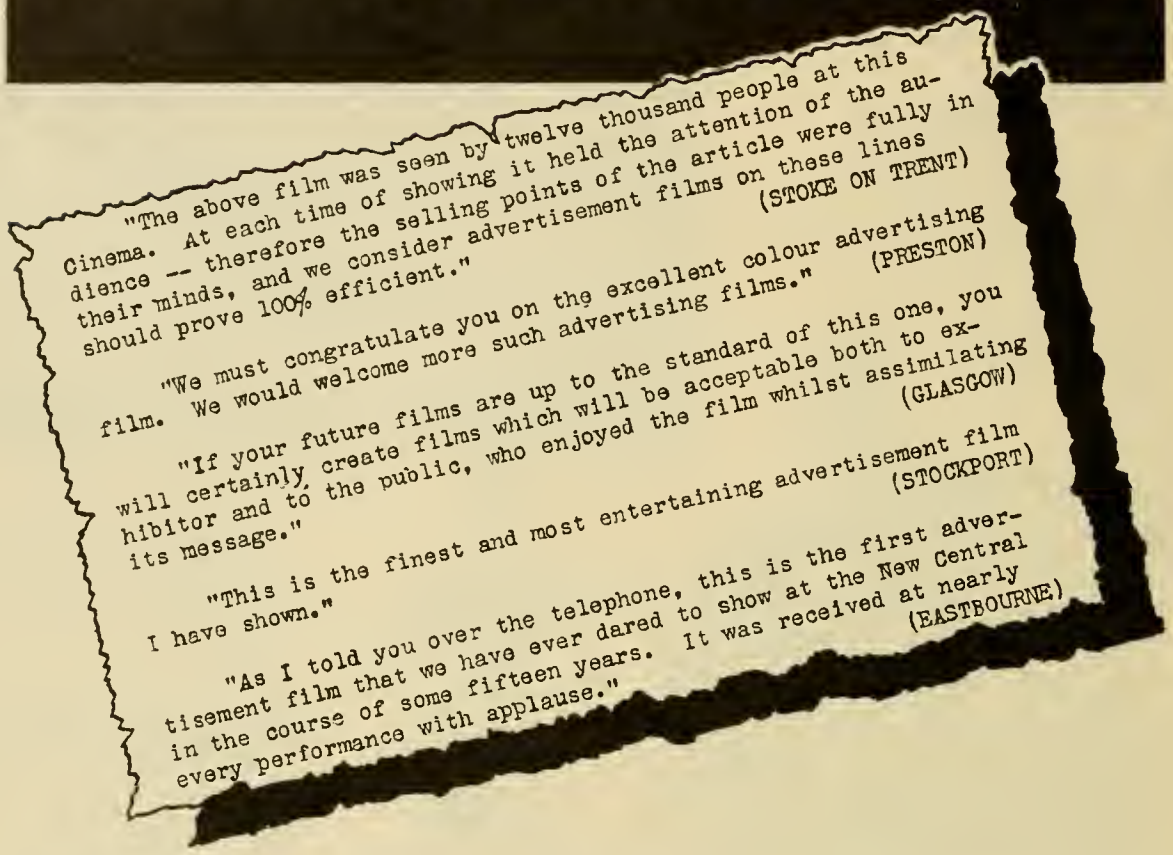
Hedda nodded, pulled out her compact, adjusted the "amusing" hat, tugged at the jacket (by Adrian).

"Well, one mustn't be indiscreet. I'm afraid I must be going," she said. "When do you want to interview me?"

"I have," I said.

The head-waiter motioned to his satellites to clear up the tea-cup that crashed on the floor.

what the exhibitors say . . .



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Review of the Month

THE STORY OF LOUIS PASTEUR. (William Dieterle—Warner.)

So great is the honourable contrast between this film and the ordinary clap-trap of the screen, that it is hard to praise it with that persuasive moderation which alone will ensure it the public it deserves—a public of men and women (with, certainly, their children) who, sickened long ago by the wild superlatives of film criticism, have come to regard cinematograph theatres as places where all values are falsified and where little more can be hoped for than relatively harmless triviality. *Pasteur* stands apart. As technical experiment, it is of no importance whatever. Though its production, which is American, is admirably competent, no one will go to it for the sake of dazzling spectacle, daring fantasy, or exceptional lighting and rhythm. That is not its purpose. Its purpose is to relate, without affectation and without the throwing out of sops to fools, the story of Louis Pasteur's single-handed struggle for scientific truth. To some the emphasis may seem to rest on the word "scientific," but the full value of Pasteur's life and of this account of it is not perceived unless his science be regarded as the splendid occasion, but still only the occasion, of his single-mindedness and courage. What he did mattered greatly to the world; what he was mattered more; and it is the rare virtue of this film that, while it makes of his actions, his discoveries, his perils, and his triumphs an enthralling narrative, it yet contrives by the simplicity of its treatment to enable his spiritual force to outshine his material achievement. It is for this reason that the film, which might have been no more than a glorification of a brilliant chemist, will move profoundly men and women so varied in outlook and knowledge that they have little in common but their fellowship in what Dostoevsky called "suffering humanity."

There are passages which suggest that the stubborn enmity of Pasteur's orthodox opponents has been exaggerated. The prejudice certainly existed; the expression of it was fierce and sometimes unscrupulous; but the story would have been improved if the conservative doctors had been given credit at least for a little more *finesse*. Probably this crudeness was admitted in order to make clear the steps in Pasteur's advance and the nature of his struggle. Certainly it throws Mr. Paul Muni's portrait of the great chemist into relief. His experiments in the treatment of anthrax, the tests he was compelled to undergo, his later research into rabies among animals and human beings, and his final vindication—all these are clearly described as part of a coherent and swiftly progressive narrative, and all are subordinated to a study of the man's unpretentious, unswerving, and unspectacularly heroic mind. Mr. Muni acts, if one may put it so, independently of the limelight, seeming always to care for the truth he is expressing and never for what hysterical admirers may think of him; and Miss Anita Louise, as Mme. Pasteur, is likewise never a film star, but is content to communicate steadily the love and loyalty and admiration of a woman of character. The result is a film which cannot be watched without deep and, in a special sense, proud emotion. It tells of a man whose life was valuable and triumphant because it was neither greedy nor divided nor afraid, and that, in the contemporary world, is a rare and welcome theme for biography.

—*The Times*

PASTEUR

The Pasteur film offers unusual excitement. Here is a film which might easily have been made by the *March of Time*. It re-enacts an actual story. It describes with all the authenticity of documentary evidence a fighting issue of modern history. It is, with its story of Pasteur's researches into microbes and vaccines, dramatic to the point of poignancy. It mixes the classic ingredients of pity and terror and resolves them in a heroic portrait of self-sacrifice and achievement.

But the staggering thing for a Hollywood picture is that the drama is taken out of the fact. The drama is rooted in the scientific issue behind. The episodes take their life from the paraphernalia and the patience of research. It is the first film from Hollywood which has dropped the formula of theatrical back cloth and opened a dramatic window on the world of actuality. As such this is a historic achievement.

It will have imitators and not all will appreciate the revolutionary principle which is involved. Some will. The documentary men have shouted for this for ten years and will very rightly claim it as their own. Here, resplendent in Hollywood dressing and vitalised by a great actor, is a film which is own-brother to the *Contacts* and the *Aero Engines*. W.F.N.

FURY. (Fritz Lang—M.G.M.)

Fury, the story of how a mob in a small southern town lynches an innocent man who has been arrested under suspicion of kidnapping, is astonishing, the only film I know to which I have wanted to attach the epithet of "great." Mr. Spencer Tracy as the victim; Miss Sylvia Sidney as his girl; Mr. Edward Ellis as the sheriff, harsh, upright, ready to defend his prisoner to the last tear-gas bomb: all these give their finest performances. Miss Sidney in particular. She has never more deeply conveyed the pain and inarticulacy of tenderness. No film passion here, no exaggeration of the ordinary human feeling: it is the ordinary recognisable agony, life as one knows it is lived. And the same power to catch vividly the truthful detail makes the lynching of almost unbearable horror.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

So *Fury* becomes, both as propaganda and entertainment, no dialectical protest against the immorality of lynching. Lynching has been, indeed, in American history just as often theoretically a moral act undertaken by clans and vigilantes rising up from the people against lawless minorities. But where *Fury* passes superbly beyond the apt melodrama of *Barbary Coast* and *Frisco Kid* and even *The Birth of a Nation* is in exhibiting (through Fritz Lang's direction) and diagnosing (through Krasna's dogging script) the kind of emotion that unites nice middle-class people in obscene hysteria. It fails to show the *sequence* of that emotion. And the real denouement of the picture, the kinds of reaction that the lynchers feel between the fire and when they appear in court—this is not there.

But *Fury* is a tremendous beginning. The end will be in a Dostoevsky, who knows the tragedy of these emotions. Or in a Fascism, which merely likes to feel them.

—Alistair Cooke, *The Listener*

DANCING PIRATE. (Lloyd Corrigan—Pioneer Pictures.)

Dancing Pirate's colour is still bright and raw but far better suited to songs and dances than the less showmanly shades of nature. Colour-Director Robert Edmond Jones has made a flat sunlight like sauterne and romantic blue moonlight in which the company in blue costumes does the "When You're Dancing the Waltz" number.

—*Time*

First dud for Technicolor. Romantic buffoonery with Charles Collins, a pretty Fred Astaire. Doesn't quite catch the gaily silly tone it attempts.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

THE MOON'S OUR HOME. (William A. Seiter—Universal.)

Our hopes are raised by the thought that this picture may prove to be another *Blonde Bombshell*, Hollywood's one great laugh at itself. With just a little more cynicism and a little more spite the director, Mr. William A. Seiter, might have made this into a stirring comedy. But so far from being satire, the film is really no more than a good time being had by all, and we may go home serenely content in the knowledge that film stars are in every way as charming in their private lives as we have always been led to believe.

—*The Times*

The Moon's Our Home has a gaiety which distinguishes it from the majority of films which are called comedies. Though the picture would have gained from being directed by a Capra or a Lubitsch, it has the advantage of dialogue by Dorothy Parker, and the personalities of the players invest the familiar material with a freshness which it is always a pleasure to find that Hollywood can retrieve.

—*The Manchester Guardian*

ONE RAINY AFTERNOON. (Rowland V. Lee—Pickford-Lasky.)

I am most anxious that *One Rainy Afternoon* should on no account be missed. The film deals (let me put it briefly, so that I may rhapsodise at some length) with the dire and dreadful consequences that befell a nice young man when he

kissed the daughter of a newspaper-magnate in a darkened cinema by mistake. The scene is set in Paris, and the picture bubbles with true Parisian gaiety. It has the authentic Clair touch, it winks and sparkles with a vintage roguery that beggars description. Taste it and see.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

The situation, in the hands of a Lubitsch, seems to suggest comic possibilities; it might even have passed for wit in the holiday season. But Rowland V. Lee has punched his actors into overpointing every line and overdoing every gesture, and the result is just about as light as a jam roly-poly.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

SECRET INTERLUDE. (Roy Del Ruth—20th Century-Fox.)

There may be a touch of Eugene O'Neill in the title, but there's much more good old Ethel M. Dell in the picture. The love scenes are quite beautifully done. These idyllic interludes are expertly woven into the fabric of unfriendly circumstance, so that your heart is wrung for the young couple. The result is a triumph of frank sentimentalism, and—deny it as you will—we are all sentimental at heart.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

Seldom in these days does one see quite so innocent a use of the old-fashioned hocus-pocus. Hardly a trick of nickelodeon art has been omitted. Innocent, perhaps, is hardly the word, since it's clearly as cold-blooded a putting-together of the old stuff as has been tried in years. And I don't want to hear a peep from those persons of dejected wit who say such things are so bad they're funny.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

THREE LITTLE WOLVES. (Walt Disney.)

Mickey Mouse is to-day producing *Silly Symphonies* at such speed that only the film-addict could keep up with them, and I am many behind; but I have seen the *Three Little Wolves* and can pronounce it only moderate. In the *Three Little Pigs* there was a certain comparatively steady movement; by means of a united front these very pink porkers progressed to victory. But in the new film, in which the same three are threatened by one big bad wolf and three small ones, there is so much rapidity, so much confusion, that the pigs inside the wolves' kitchen—in fact actually in the stew-pan over the fire—would have been dead long before their rescue. Walt Disney would lose nothing by slowing down a bit. —E. V. L., *Punch*

BROKEN BLOSSOMS. (Hans Brahm—Twickenham.)

By the extraordinary depth of her emotional intensity in this performance Miss Haas takes her place at once among the screen's greatest artistes. —*Birmingham Mail*

Honestly I had a hard job to be interested in the Chinese and the Child in *Broken Blossoms*. I have the greatest admiration for the ability of this charming artist (Miss Haas) and for the determination with which she puts on the accent, but her native accent comes through still, and never for a moment was I convinced that she belonged to dockland.

—A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

The choice of Fraulein Haas for the part of Lucy could not have been bettered, even if Gish or Bergner had been available. Her Cockney was charming and not at all far-fetched; her acting restrained, simple, and highly sensitive—a lovely performance.

—*The New Statesman and Nation*

SAN FRANCISCO. (W. S. Van Dyke—M.G.M.)

Out of the gusty, brawling, catastrophic history of the Barbary Coast early in the century, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has fashioned a prodigally generous and completely satisfying photoplay. Primarily, of course, this is the tale of a city, a vigorous story told in splashing melodramatic phrases and with the rich vocabulary of a thoroughly expert cast and one of the shrewdest directors in Hollywood. But one cannot reduce Mr. Gable, Miss MacDonald, Spencer Tracy, Jack Holt and the others in the cast to mere abstractions. *San Francisco* tells their story, too, and with a wealth of dramatic detail. Mr. Tracy, late of *Fury*, is heading surely toward an award for the finest performances of the year.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Both the Barbary Coast and the Earthquake are obviously rich with screen material; and in M.G.M.'s big new thriller they have been combined with the proper results. The quake is all that you could want, and it makes a fine show. Aside from the antics in Frisco's dives and the whole affair of the earthquake, the film is well supplied with music, all of which I thought Miss MacDonald did very agreeably. Altogether, the picture is a thorough and strenuous show, of a fine, substantial class.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

MODERN TIMES. (Chaplin.)

Its innate fault, that of clumsy and uncertain continuity, is due I think to Mr. Chaplin's courageous departure from pathos. For he knows no better continuity than the moments of fantasy generated by pathetic incidents. And here there are none. But untamed behind all the lavish scoring are a few vagrant Chaplin tunes, and untailored through all the over-dressed production is the pantomimist himself, energetically nose-thumbing his own incongruous prosperity, sharpening the old marvellous gestures with a new Latin flipness, his mercurial body scribbling through the piece like a caricaturist's pencil through an album of photographs.

—Alistair Cooke, *Sight and Sound*

The chief waste of time is to gas about what is good and what is bad in Charlie's film: how it's got no plot and no story, the incidents and even gags repeat themselves, the end doesn't solve anything, the pathos flat, the heroine hard, technique deliberately out of the Ark—in a thousand ways we can prove to ourselves it's the worst film Charlie has ever made. What's the use, when it still remains so much more enchanting than the films that anyone else makes? Charlie's films are *sui generis;* we can carp at them if we like, it still remains we'd rather see them than anybody else's we can think back and remember since we saw the last.

Why? It's not just manner, the timing of his gags, the rhythmic what not with which he, as no one else can, dives into an inch of water, it's matter inseparable from these. What is his matter? I remember an Amtorg official who once set himself this question. He craved an interview with Charlie. "I will determine Chaplin's orientation to the revolution once and for all," he announced firmly. We arranged it. The little man was on the set and in his make-up. Fixing his visitor in an armchair, he turned on him for some minutes the batteries of his charm. The visitor was hypnotised. After a more than ordinary abject reply from the guest, Charlie enquired mischievously: "But I am surprised to hear you say that. Aren't you then a Communist?" "Not exactly," replied the official. "What then?" "Well—you might call me a Soviet Conservative." It was not Charlie's relationto the revolution that had been established. —Ivor Montagu, *W.F.N.*

"Broken Blossoms"

DESIRE. (Frank Borzage—Paramount.)

If ever there is a museum for films this one should have a place in it as a well-nigh perfect model of its type. Construction is excellent—the opening sequences outline something new in jewel-theft technique, and new characters and new situations keep cropping up to hold the interest. —*The Sydney Bulletin*

In *Desire* Frank Borzage's direction has been trimmed and polished by a Lubitsch in his best form since *Trouble in Paradise*. That is a strong sentence, and it was meant to be. After the tribe of knockabouts, gagmen, wisecrackers, the purveyors of "smart" comedy, Mr. Lubitsch's picture is like—I almost said—a breath of spring. For to the strong light, the trees and the mountains of southern California (here called Spain, so that the audience may admire aloud with fewer misgivings) is added a sure, beautifully written piece about the usual Lubitsch trifles, about crooks and fake countesses breathless before the dawn of romance.

—Alistair Cooke, *Sight and Sound*

TUDOR ROSE. (Robert Stevenson — Gainsborough.)

This is one of the best half-dozen films ever made in this country. Two years ago Robert Stevenson wrote a screen play on the tragic life of Lady Jane Grey and the intrigues which surrounded her after the death of Henry VIII. The story is told with simplicity, restraint, dignity, and power. The acting—notably good from Hardwicke and Miss Pilbeam—maintains a remarkable standard down to the smallest part. But the real star is Robert Stevenson, who has turned out a beautiful, moving, and—highest praise of all—a completely intelligent picture.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

Exact or not, this is a picture in a hundred, human, moving, and performed with skill. It is set out extremely simply, and played extremely quietly; no one has the bad taste to exaggerate his portrait, and at least three of the players, the children, Nova Pilbeam and Desmond Tester, and Leslie Perrins, have sunk themselves so completely in the mood of their parts that they glow with a kind of golden renaissance glory.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

WHERE THERE'S A WILL. (William Beaudine —Gainsborough.)

In the past many British film comedies have suffered from slowness of action and dullness of dialogue, but here the introduction of the American director, William Beaudine, has resulted in something approaching the best standards of Hollywood. *Where There's a Will* presents Will Hay in a giddy adventure concerning American bank thieves in London. The action is swift and sure and uproarious. The star is at his best, and is joyously supported by an excellent cast. This film will be a tremendous popular success.

—Seton Margrave, *The Daily Mail*

Where There's a Will, its venerable gags and its absurdities on one side, is vastly entertaining. Pleasant, friendly, low-brow people will chuckle all the way through it, and I can guarantee a few genuine explosions of mirth.

—Gale Pedrick, *The Star*

"Desire"

"Tudor Rose"

FORGOTTEN WOMEN. (William Beaudine — Wardour Films.)

Nine women in a dug-out. Nine hysterical, coarse-mouthed, ranting, garrulous women, arguing, sneering, shrieking, and screaming, nagging each other interminably until the incessant din of their raucous voices becomes almost unbearable, and even the short interludes of bombing, gunfire, and aerial attack come as a welcome relief from that ceaseless babble. Not for a long time has Hollywood produced so inglorious a picture of lust and blood and war.

—*The Times*

Here is an all-woman cast in a war drama. The story is set round a canteen close to the lines, and is sincerely told.

—Maurice Cowan, *The Daily Herald*

"Poppy"

POPPY. (A. Edward Sutherland—Paramount.)

On this auspicious occasion, and the opening of any W. C. Fields picture can be no less, it is our solemn obligation to report that the forces of nature and of circumstance continue to be arrayed solidly against our hero. But Mr. Fields triumphs—as Mr. Fields always triumphs—and it is a glorious victory, for him and for comedy.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

That Mr. Fields has possibly not yet learned the lines might be suggested by this new and slightly blurred affair, which isn't, in my opinion, one of the best of the pictures he has made throughout the last eleven years. That it doesn't in the least matter whether he knows his lines or not is perfectly true. At least one can feel pretty sure that he has given us one of the pleasantest, most charming little comedies we shall get this summer.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

He is really independent of either physical comedy or wisecrack, though he uses both when they suit. With Fields, as with only the few great clowns, the man himself is the fun.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

ON ICE. (Disney.)

On Ice is a new Mickey Mouse cartoon in colour, in which Walt Disney's comic inventiveness is matched by his skilful control of colour. In all but the sound accompaniment, this is the equal of *The Band Concert*.

—Forsyth Hardy, *The Scotsman*

LETZTE ROSE. (Karl Anton—Tobis.)

Here is a German's idea of seventeenth-century England—an England filled with Elizabethan houses that look (oddly) far older than they do to-day; with country lads and lasses dressed in what suspiciously resembles the native costume of Austro-Hungary; with reapers who reap in time to music, with drinkers who drink in time to music, and with singers who very nearly succeed in singing in time to music.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

One cannot complain of the absurd English settings of *Letzte Rose;* they are not more false than the Vienna of innumerable English pictures, but the tra-la-la melodies, the hearty Teutonic merrymaking, and the determined prettiness of the photography are tedious, not the less tedious for being German. The Continental racket has become rather tiresome, and the films at Studio One have not been noticeably above the Hollywood level. —Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

WHITE ANGEL. (William Dieterle—Warner.)

Formally suggested by Lytton Strachey's essay, but in no way resembling the Strachey analysis, the piece shows us Miss Francis in the role of Florence Nightingale. There are no flagrant old-fashioned movie distortions of historical facts here, aside from the general atmosphere and performance, which are unfailingly picturesque. Miss Francis, even in the severe garb of a nurse in the Crimea, is the ceremonial brunette that she always is, much more the "Lady with a Lamp" than the Strachey character. The picture is a little school-bookish, perfectly respectable, and, I should say, quite on the dull side. —John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

W.F.N. SELECTION

The Story of Louis Pasteur	***
Fury	**
Modern Times	**
Poppy	*

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

Fury
Desire
Tudor Rose
Dancing Pirate
San Francisco
The Story of Louis Pasteur
The White Angel
Broken Blossoms
The Moon's our Home
One Rainy Afternoon
Secret Interlude
Three Little Wolves
Poppy
Where There's a Will
Forgotten Women
Letzte Rose
On Ice
Modern Times

"Letzte Rose"

New questionnaire asks opinions on colour, stars, stories

BY EWART HODGSON

WITH THE COMING issue of Sidney Bernstein's fifth Questionnaire the 350,000 weekly patrons of the cinemas with which he is associated will once again enjoy the privilege of saying just what they think about films, film stars, and a dozen other aspects of cinema entertainment in general.

Infinite care has been taken in the drawing up of questions calculated to discover the exact likes and dislikes of picturegoers.

In the fourth Questionnaire issued in 1934, thirteen questions were asked ranging from :

Who are your favourite film stars? . . .
Which film stars do you dislike most?

to:

How often do you go to the pictures? . . .
What part of a cinema do you usually sit in?

Experience of Questionnaires extending over nine years has taught Bernstein that basic questions such as the first two can always usefully be repeated, but in the 1936 form certain new questions, prompted by current cinema developments, will have to be asked.

For instance, a new question on the subject of coloured talkies is to be included. It will probably take the form of:

Have you see any coloured talkies?
Do you like them?
Would you rather they had been photographed in black and white in the ordinary way?

It is impossible to prophesy the results that will accrue from this question. The film industry, as a whole, continues to flirt with colour rather than marry it, feeling maybe that cinemagoers are too conservative as yet to accept anything but black and white photography.

A recent development which, it is felt, calls for a question, is the current tendency for Hollywood to produce feature pictures running more than two hours, thus making it impractical for the ordinary double feature programme to be sustained.

Certain close students of the cinema see in this development a move by Hollywood to lead exhibitors back to single feature programmes.

But does the average cinemagoer want his feature pictures to run longer than an hour and a half? That is a question which the Bernstein Questionnaire will endeavour to solve.

In the 1934 Questionnaire patrons took delight in listing the stars they dislike most. Such was the significance of the results derived from this question that it was made obvious to Sidney Bernstein that the word "dislike" did not adequately express the attitude of the public towards certain stars.

Experience at the box office has definitely proved that aside from unpopular stars there are stars who definitely keep people away from the cinema. Hence the decision to include in the 1936 Questionnaire a subsidiary question to follow: "Which film stars do you dislike most?"

This question will take the form of:

Do you actually stay away from the cinema if a film is showing with any of the stars you dislike? If so, put an X against the name or names about whom you feel so strongly.

In this connection it is doubtless true that many exhibitors are unaware of the anti-box-office influence wielded by stars whose personalities evoke such dislike. Certainly the studios are ignorant of the true state of affairs since they continue to impose these stars' pictures on exhibitors and public.

When preparation was being made for the issue of the 1936 Questionnaire various public bodies were invited to advance their views and suggestions. It is significant that the Office of Special Enquiries and Reports of the Board of Education were prompt to seize the opportunity thus offered.

"We would be interested," they say in a letter to Bernstein theatres, "to see the results which you would get from the following questions":

(1) Do you take your children to "A" films?

(2) Do you find that your children are picking up an American accent or vocabulary?

(3) Do you object to advertisement films?

(4) Would you like to see in your theatre the best of continental films, in the language of the country but with explanatory subtitles in English?

(5) Number the following types of short films in the order of your preference: Travel, Industry, Science, Animal Life, Trade, Sport.

These suggestions from Whitehall have been the subject of careful consideration and so far as it is practical they will be included in the Questionnaire.

Also, the National Institute of Industrial Psychology has evinced an interest in the form to be taken by the Questionnaire. Some of the questions which they suggest are:

Do you read reviews of films in newspapers or magazines? If so, in what newspapers or magazines?

Do you agree with the opinions of the writer?

Are there any groups of films which you like so much that you never miss a chance of going to see one? e.g. those with a particular star, by a particular director, or about a particular subject.

Are there any groups of films which you dislike so much that you always avoid going to see them?

Here again these suggestions will have an important bearing on this year's Bernstein Questionnaire.

Little man—what now?

When *Modern Times* came out I went to see it, full of faith despite *City Lights*, to see Chaplin come back. I laughed a lot but after the show I was dubious. Two weeks ago I saw *Modern Times* again. The Marble Arch Pavilion was only a quarter full and I did not get a heavy laugh out of the whole picture. The film is moderately funny but something is missing. Chaplin has changed, not in his acting but in his outlook.

Before *City Lights* and *Modern Times* he was everybody's little man, typifying man throughout time. Small, up against trouble, sentimental and usually coming out on top. In *Modern Times* he no longer typifies, he criticises. Why has he changed? Was it his critics and admirers writing and speaking on his faculty for social comment? For something has influenced him to take himself seriously as a social critic. *Modern Times* is the result. Instead of our little man we have a man with a mission. All would have been well if his attempts at social criticism had come off. But his sociology is weak and one-sided and it has killed the old spontaneous slapstick from which Chaplin's real virtues came. Without slapstick a Chaplin film is dead; it moves slowly if at all.

There are two minor points of criticism; one is Paulette Goddard and the other a lack of continuity. We know Chaplin is close to his leading lady, but why must be express his private troubles in his social work? Miss Goddard's part in the film seems to be the result of an old man sentimentalising his own petty troubles. Miss Goddard herself is moderately good but her role is unfortunate. The film took two and a half years to make and it has a trouble common to long-distance films. Every sequence is so highly polished in itself that it has only a scenario connection with the others.

Expectations for a future Chaplin-acted film seem bleak. He says he is going over to directing.

Schmeling did it. Why not Chaplin?

JOHN TAYLOR

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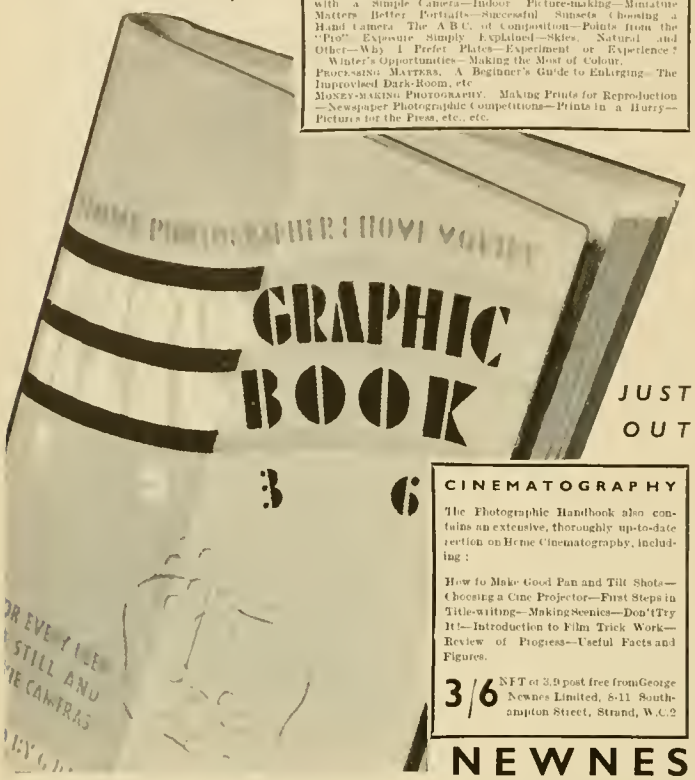

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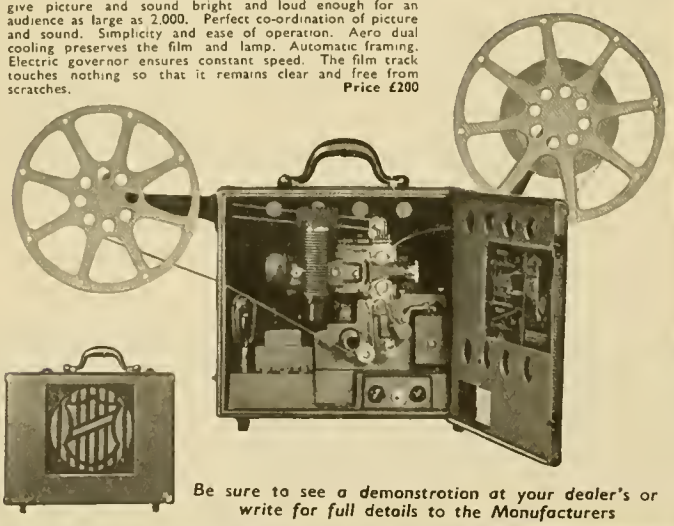

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Audiences and Film workers organise on Political lines in France

BY OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT

The changed political situation in France is having enormous influence on the cultural activities of all branches of art. New forces are growing up in the petrified fields of French art tradition.

In the theatre the L'U.T.I.F. (L'Union des Théatres Independants de France, the former Fédération du Théatre Ouvrier de France) came into existence two months ago. It is led by men like Jouvet, Dullin, the foremost representatives of the French theatre. On July 14th it will make its début with a spectacular mass pageant celebrating the French Revolution, on the very locality where the ancestors of to-day's generation fought it out.

As far as music is concerned, the *Fédération Musicale Populaire* was formed and people of the fame of Darius Milhaud, Jaques Ibert, Charles Koechlin have devoted their work to writing music for simple orchestras, mostly brass and unison voices. There seems to be a new demand for music since the *Front populaire* came to life, and it will not be at all surprising if this new vigorous movement of the French people gives to the world more songs like the *Marseillaise* and the *Internationale*.

The Art-Federation has organised a Courbet-Exhibition. There is activity in every branch: but the most interesting progress seems to be going on in motion pictures.

The pictures turned out by the French industry, as an average, are not too good. Besides, there is a censorship, which kills any attempt to break the traditions of the existing standard in production. But the French people do want better pictures, *their* pictures. As a result of this popular demand *CINE-LIBERTE* was formed, a large organisation which boasts of a long list of well-known collaborators and the head of which at present is Jean Renoir.

At first, *Ciné-Liberté*—formed last November—was intended to be an association of left technical engineers. The word *technician* is used by *Ciné-Liberté* on purpose, instead of the vague name *cinéaste*. This organisation wants to distinguish definitely between the real workers of films and the mere producer or distributor. *Ciné-Liberté* has been created to produce a *direct and immediate connection between all filmworkers and film production* without the interference of avaricious intermediates and middle-men.

Difficulties with censorship arose after the production of Jean Renoir's communist film *Le Vie est à Nous*. *Ciné-Liberté* was aware of the importance of having a spectator's section. Many comrades had already been eager to join an institution fighting for better films and against censorship.

Sections were immediately formed. Already, after a few months' work, *Ciné-Liberté* has about 10,000 members all over France. In the 6th, 7th, 15th, 18th and 20th *arrondissements* these spectators' sections are already in existence; they are being formed in the 11th, 12th and 19th, etc. And, of course, suburbs have their own sections as well as other towns—for instance, Reims or Nice, in the provinces. It is the first task of *four main sections* to procure good films and especially films banned by censorship. The members or visitors of a cinema-club meet for these films in some cinema, as *Ciné-Liberté* has no halls of its own. The cost of a whole programme for a single showing is about 600 francs. Films available include *Potemkin*, *Borinage*, *Last Days of St. Petersburg*, *Soap Bubbles*, *Three Songs of Lenin*, *War is Hell*, *Beggars Opera*, *La Maternelle*, *Thunder over Mexico*, *Jazz Comedy*, *New Gulliver*, newsreels, educationals and some early Chaplins.

Many of these films are censored in France, but can be shown to members of *Ciné-Liberté* branches. (Membership costs 5 francs 50 centimes a year.)

Even so, the authorities overruled *Ciné-Liberté's* protests and refused to allow any showings whatever of Piscator's *Revolt of the Fishermen*.

The third section is the technical one. There are sub-divisions for cutters, operators, etc. This section's members meet every Thursday evening for discussion. They are employed in the fourth section, the section of production (and distribution). Here, a "coopérative" has been formed.

Cinéma-Liberté has already produced a number of smaller films, mostly documentary; a film of the May-day demonstrations (300 feet), and another one of the 11th November. A longer film is *La mure des fédérés* (900 feet). A film showing the commemoration of the "commune" of 1871 was prepared in two days. This fact indicates how quickly the technical section of *C.L.* works! These films are all silent.

During the strikes, a strike film was produced; a live "reportage" of about 3000 feet.

These films are not expensive; the smaller silents cost 3,000 frs. *Buffalo*, Ciné-Liberté's first talkie, cost about 12,000 frs. And Renoir's big film did not cost more than 300,000 frs. This in France, where an average film costs more than a million francs, and very often 1½ millions.

Renoir's last picture, *La Vie est à nous*, a film made for the Communist Party in France, is the first product of the new movement, a picture which is widely acclaimed and which proves the correctness of the basis of *Ciné-Liberté*, which combines the work of professionals and amateurs, which uses stock-shots and specially directed scenes just as required and achieves a really impressive result in Renoir's hands.

I have seen crowds cheering the picture, and after the show, almost without exception, joining *Ciné-Liberté* as members.

The general committee of *Ciné-Liberté* is formed by Moussinac, Claude Aveline, Modot, Lefevre (three actors), Feyder, Gréville, Painlevé, Dulac, Jean Richard Bloch, Jeanson and others. Jean Renoir is general secretary.

Ophüls Directs in Holland

W.F.N.'s Dutch Correspondent

MAX OPHULS, director of *Liebelei* and *La Signora di Tutti*, is making in Holland a new film, *Comedy for Gold*, from the scenario by Walter Schlee. After its completion it is rumoured that he will come to England to direct Annabella in a new picture.

Ophüls is a strong individualist. He refuses to be embroiled in studio mass production. He also feels that the present necessity in films for catering to the man-in-the-street is merely a childish ailment of a growing industry—to be compared with the technical difficulties of colour and stereoscopy.

Another of Ophüls' theories is that the present influence of literature on film will give way to an influence of film on literature. As a basis for this theory he cites a number of modern French novels which have followed to some extent film technique. He is convinced, too, that the recent improvement in American production is due to the *avant-garde* movement in Europe.

Speaking of his recent trip to Russia, Ophüls states that at the present moment the Russian film is technically and artistically below the average of European and American productions, and he believes that this is largely due to the Government's insistence on "tendency." This, he says, is the only reason why Russian production is not a threat to America.

In 1938 Russia plans to produce 800 pictures, some of which will be made at the new studio in the Crimea. Some of these, he suggested, will be produced especially for the European and American market, so that 1938 may prove to be a decisive year in the international status of the Soviet film.

Ophüls is to direct at least one of the new films.

Cedric Belfrage, who is now in Moscow, will write about Russia's "Gollywood" in W.F.N.'s September issue.

Freedom for French Newsreels

Greater freedom for newsreels is guaranteed by amendments to the French censorship decrees.

Hitherto newsreels, whether domestic or foreign, circulating in France, had to receive official approval. The new regulations exempt the reels from this obligation, subject to certain formalities being complied with, although in exceptional cases the producers may be required to submit editions to the police before releasing for public exhibition.

The new decrees also exempt from censorship documentary films, and animated cartoons made for a State department, educational films and commercial publicity films not exceeding a running time of three minutes.

Reasons for change of style in Russian films

BY F. D. KLINGENDER

News about present film trends in Russia published in H. V. Meyerowitz's article on Russian films for our July number has aroused a great deal of interest and argument. The following article argues that the change in style of Russian films must be associated with the passing of a period of intense struggle and the development of the Soviet State.

THOSE OF US who have not, like Mr. Meyerowitz, had the advantage of seeing the most recent Russian film productions on the spot, are at a great disadvantage in discussing the critical points he has raised. Nevertheless, the tendencies he so heartily deplores have been sufficiently clear in some of the pictures last seen in this country (*Jazz Comedy*, *St. Petersburg Nights*, *Storm*, *Lieutenant Kije*) to provide a basis for such a discussion.

There can be little disagreement concerning the basic facts, first that the style represented by the great silent films of the 1920's (and in a belated instance to a certain extent still by Pudovkin's *Deserter*) has passed and, secondly, that the quality of the new production has (again with some highly important exceptions such as Chapaieff) been disappointing to Western film enthusiasts. What has not, however, been examined, either by Mr. Meyerowitz, or by most other writers on the subject, is *why* there has necessarily been this change in style and what are the conditions of life and outlook in Russia at the present time which make the achievement of a new style imperative. Like every other sphere of art and culture, intimately related to the outlook of the Russian people, their films can only be fully interpreted in terms of the vast changes in the conditions of existence that have characterised the development of the Soviet state since the Revolution, and not in terms of any abstract aesthetic standard. The Soviet films that have achieved world fame were without exception reflections in art of an outlook characteristic for a period of intense struggle. A period of struggle against political foes both external and internal and for the establishment, in the shortest possible time, of the material and technical basis for the new Soviet society.

The films of the NEP and early Five-year Plan Periods were therefore in the first place great epics of the actual Revolution and, secondly, inspiring documents of a stubborn struggle with nature and for the mastery of a new technique. Heroism, sacrifice, effort, hard and exacting in spite of the ultimate triumph, were the dominant notes. This basic mood found a ready echo in a capitalist world but recently emerged from the post-war crisis and the struggle culminating in the English general strike of 1926 and advancing towards the new upheavals of the 1930's. At the same time the formal break with the past that attained its highest achievement in these films presented an inspiring (though by no means entirely parallel) example to the western artists.

Towards the end of this period, however, a new note appeared that already foreshadowed the change that was to come. As the victorious issue, first of the political and (with the progress of the first Five-Year Plan) also of the economic struggle, became more and more certain, interest began increasingly to be concentrated, not on the problems of form and technique, but on that of creating a new type of man. The problem of the new human relations and of the changing outlook of the Soviet workers both collectively and individually became the central theme. Already approached in *The Road to Life*, this new emphasis achieved its first culmination in the series of films dealing with the human aspects of industrial instruction (*Counter-plan*, *Men and Jobs*, etc.). Macharet's *Men and Jobs*, still fresh in the memory of British audiences, illustrates this trend to perfection. At the same time it will enable us to understand the new problems facing the Russian artists in the film as in any other sphere to-day.

The heroes of this film are the members of a shock brigade of Russian workers employed in the construction of the Dnieperstroy Dam. The change in their whole outlook as they learned to master the new industrial technique in competition with a brigade led by an American engineer is its central theme. Ragged and primitive before their achievement, they attain a new pride in their skill and a new respect even for their outward appearance, once they have mastered their tasks. It is difficult to forget the feeling of elation and joy inspired by the final shot of this film. Looking down on the gigantic dam from his window high above the river the American engineer sees the new mechanic, formerly a simple stoker, standing beside his heavy crane. The crane, formerly ill-cared for and screeching at every movement of a lever, is spotlessly clean. The mechanic himself is decked out in a brand-new suit and wears a brightly chequered cap. He flicks a speck of dust with a rag from the machine. He spits. But he soils his shoe in doing so. He quickly removes this blemish before anyone has seen it and returns to his former position with a gesture full of pride and elation.

The Russian workers who are conducting the Second Five-Year Plan to it ssuccessful conclusion have conquered the enemies that formerly threatened the existence of their new society. In a period of unparalleled strain they have mastered the difficult technique of the most highly developed modern industry and have firmly established the material basis for their new life. They are now eager to enjoy the first fruits of their past efforts. For the first time in history the goods of this world are available for them. Cultural snobs may smile at the so obviously new suit and the chequered cap of our happy mechanic. They overlook the fact that it is the first time that he can have a decent suit, that he can relax from his past struggle and is eager for the joys and comforts of life. Surely the fact that by his own efforts he has conquered the goods of this world for himself is of far greater importance than his as yet somewhat primitive and untrained standards of taste.

It is this new situation, this unexampled demand of a whole nation for joy and beauty that determines the tasks of the Russian artist to-day. All emancipation leads back to the essentially human, said Marx. For the first time, the problems of human relationships appear in their pure form without the distorting elements of class relationships, contrasts of wealth and poverty and antiquated taboos. Never as yet have these problems found expression in art. Once that expression will have been found it will be an achievement even greater than that of the epic heroisms of the civil war and constructive period.

"Moscow" (Kultkino, 1925)

Replies to "U.S.S.R. Goes Hollywood"

From a sheaf of correspondence that arrived in reply to H. V. Meyerowitz's article we have selected the two representative letters below.

SIR,—Please permit me to congratulate you for having published Mr. Meyerowitz's very timely article on Soviet cinema. I feel that there are many readers of your valuable paper who think that it was high time that a description of the recent unfortunate trends in Soviet cinema were made public. Mr. Meyerowitz, whose descriptions are borne out by numbers of discriminating film critics (including many sympathetic to the Soviet political regime), unfortunately assigns no satisfactory causes to the degeneracy of the cinema in Soviet Russia.

To those of us who, like myself, are strong protagonists of Marxism and who have followed the developments in Soviet literature and drama as well, it is apparent that the reactionary character of Soviet cinema is no isolated phenomenon. The same vulgarisations as those described by Mr. Meyerowitz are to-day to be seen in all cultural forms practised in the U.S.S.R. Why is this?

Marxists believe that not only the direction but also the technique of cultural forms are determined (as in the case of all social phenomena) by the productive relations of that society in which they exist. The reasons for a *general* trend in a particular direction can always be explained by an investigation of the economic basis of the society in question. The shift towards Hollywood on the part of Soviet cinema is due to the general line of the Soviet bureaucracy which to-day is all for "respectability." To discerning political observers the Stalin-Howard interview came as no surprise. The adherence by the Russian Communist Party to the official theory of "Socialism in one country" has impelled it to seek the assistance not of the workers in other countries but of their capitalist governments. Concessions to international capitalism have had their effect on the internal policy of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet Film Conference held in Moscow last year emphasised the importance of dealing with the individual in future Russian pictures. Shumiatski's visit to America is not the reason for the abandonment of the old type of mass film as Mr. Meyerowitz suggests. His visit appears rather to be the visit of an investigator into the slickest methods of incorporating the new "individualisation" into Soviet films.

Culture is probably the most sensitive barometer of changes in political and economic foundations of a society. The tendency in Soviet Russia to-day towards western cultural standards, is merely a reflection of the general tendency of the Russian bureaucracy away from revolutionary Marxism. Whether this process will continue and degeneration set in, depends upon many factors. Not the least important of these is the realisation by workers and intellectuals in all countries of the absolute bankruptcy of the Stalinist organisations and the determination on their part to assist in the building of a new revolutionary Marxist International.—Yours,

DAVID SCHRIRE.

SIR,—If I went to Paris, Berlin or Tokyo to see new films, my first concern would be to get some understanding of prevailing social conditions in the country concerned in order better to judge and appreciate the general content and quality of its films.

Mr. Meyerowitz goes to Moscow, talks to a number of directors, sees four films and pessimistically concludes that all is lost and that Soviet films are aping Hollywood.

Mr. Meyerowitz does us a bad service in that he makes no attempt to relate the present stage of Russian film development to the social and economic background of the country. This omission is all the more remarkable, because more than in any other country films in Russia reflect social conditions—the approach to the realities of life is a fundamental principle of Soviet Cinema.

Russia is undergoing a transition which it is difficult for many people to realise. She has emerged from the years of Civil War and the years of the first Five-Year Plan to a stage where real prosperity for all her citizens is steadily being achieved. She has overcome food shortage, rationing has been abolished, wages are rising, the collective farmers are buying more goods than ever before and the road is clear to the next step —the completely classless society.

Russia's films are a mirror of her progress. The early films reflected the achievements and victories of the Civil war—*End of St. Petersburg*, *October*. After the Civil War came the period of economic reconstruction—and films such as *Turksib*, *General Line*. There were problems of social reconstruction and we had *The Road to Life*, problems of industrial organisation—and *Men and Jobs*.

Throughout the whole period of the Soviet Cinema, her directors and technicians have had the task of re-orientating their work to the new tasks of the society in which they live. Surely no one is going to argue that this is a bad thing for the artist? If the artist is incapable of understanding and reflecting the life around him, then he is a poor artist. It is not a question of "imposing theories" on artists. The artists themselves have the responsibility of understanding the significance of what is happening.

To-day the cinema is faced with new tasks, a fresh orientation is required. The Russian people having won their battles over intervention, economic chaos, illiteracy, and poverty, are enjoying life in the real meaning of the term. They have leisure, money, plenty of goods and a growing supply of "luxuries." In their new Constitution they have won the "Victors' Prize." Film must reflect this new spirit, this "joy of life." The people can afford to ease up a bit and naturally they want a broader sense of "entertainment" in their films. Alexandroff's *Jazz Comedy*, crude as it was, was a manifestation of this new spirit. It was gay and inconsequential, *but it could have been made at no other time*. Of *Circus*, Mr. Meyerowitz says despairingly, "I am certain it will be a success and that the theme song will be sung by everybody in Moscow." How terrible! And are we to understand that the revolution is betrayed because the Moscow proletariat whistle theme songs? And if *Circus* is a success with the Russian people, who are we to grumble? No one will deny that the Russians have a higher critical standard towards art than the English, and maybe their opinion of a film is more important than Mr. Meyerowitz's.

So for Pete's sake don't let us throw up our arms in despair because Alexandroff discovers crooning, and Vinievski indulges in a spot of slap-stick comedy.

If the Russian workers want to sing, listen to dance bands, wear check caps and make whoopee once in a while, that's just fine, and if the critics can't appreciate the reason for it—well, that's just too bad.—Yours,

RAYMOND EAST.

Polish Government Aids Producers

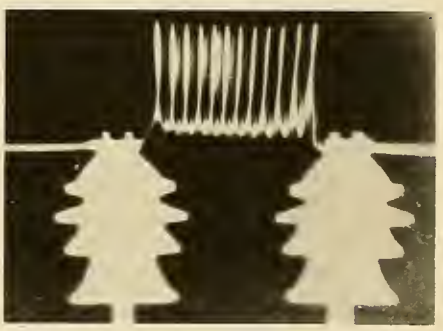
(From W.F.N.'s Warsaw Correspondent)

There are only two studios in Poland, and the technical equipment is limited. Nevertheless the output of shorts is 200 a year and indicates the tendency to make location documentaries to avoid studio problems.

The Government is encouraging this movement by subsidies to the various cultural societies concerned with production, and by a 20 per cent tax reduction to cinemas showing films approved by the Censors as artistic or educational.

Private concerns are also entering the field both in straight advertising and indirect propaganda.

Three Polish films, made with Government help and finance, were privately shown recently.



"Safety-First in Electricity"

They are straightforward propaganda for Safety-First in factories, Safety-First (Electricity), and Physical Culture.

Safety-First in Factories, directed by Cekalski, is a vivid and direct piece of work. The first half shows how carelessness leads to danger, the second shows the same work carried out under Safety-First principles.

The electrical film uses abstract effects to show the danger of meddling with live wires, exposed plugs, etc.

Finally, the Physical Culture film, brilliantly photographed by Wohl, emphasises the advantages of sport and outdoor life. It depends chiefly on its cutting, which is really remarkable, and was done by the director, Ford.

Further sponsored films are planned, including several for tourist propaganda purposes.

"Built for Eternity" (Gehr and Jungk)

Spain refuses to take films seriously

SAYS ROBERT KIEK

"COME UP and see Spain some time."

Travel-impressions: heaps of signoritas, not half as lovely as Hollywood's; bull-fights, not nearly as impressive as Cantor's.

Outdoors: dust, sun, poverty.

Notwithstanding this, 1935 produced forty original Spanish pictures—a remarkable number even considering the interest of South America in Spanish pictures.

Amsterdam Trade Show: a pile of Spanish newsreels, documentaries, and the ten best full-length pictures of the forty. A nightmare of Granadian Alhambras, still worse than the perpetual aeroplanes in Paramount newsreels!

Can one talk of a Spanish film industry? In Spain is it the same as in other small countries: a lucky beginning and a slow but certain death? Are there film societies? Is there a movement such as our late *avant-garde?* Is there hypocrisy in matters of film-as-an-art?

These questions can be answered with a decisive *no!* There is no film industry: there is a charming kind of dilettantism, which may produce now and then a more or less interesting picture. Films are being produced in Spain because some rich families want to lose their money in pictures instead of in American steel. Yet the situation in the film business is becoming sounder; this year many more films will be made than last year. The financial outlook is not too discouraging. The best companies, Atlantic, Cifesa, Filmofono, Ecea are in Madrid; Barcelona has only one important production Company: the Edici, and two independent studios which may be hired.

Despite the number of companies in Madrid, Barcelona offers many more advantages: its beautiful situation, its vicinity to the sea, its mountains and forests, and its better and sunny climate. And Barcelona is an important commercial town.

Spain lacks film societies; it needs directors, cameramen and actors who have more than stage experience. The acting in Spanish films is mostly bad and full of theatrical gestures. There is, however, one really gifted film artist in Spain: Imperio Argentina, no "pretty" star, but an actress who does not look like Bette Davis or Ginger Rogers. Imperio Argentina has a voice that may make Grace Moore jealous. *Nobleza Baturra* (Arragonian magnanimity) is her most important picture. It is the silly story of a wrongly compromised girl in an Arragonian provincial town, with all the prototypes of the good lover and the bad Don Juan. Undoubtedly this picture is the best produced to date. Its chief interest is its local colour. Imperio Argentina sings beautifully Andalusian and Gitan songs and she is a perfect dancer.

The film technicians in Spain are nearly all foreigners, principally French and German. So the German cameraman, Heinrich Gaertner—now *Henrique* Gaertner—has the field practically to himself. Sound is not good. The last scenes of *Nobleza* cannot be heard. The sound system is Spanish (Laffon-Selgas, the inventors).

The Spanish public is very fond of home-made pictures; they love—as the Italians do—songs and music, and it is cheaper to see good dancing in the cinema.

Why should one be serious about Spanish production? The Spaniards are not. There is little hope that the Spanish film industry will improve. To imagine the contrary would be to build castles in Spain.

But Imperio Argentina will find her way to Hollywood.

Belgium may build national studio

The report of the Cinema Committee appointed by the Government will be issued shortly. It is certain that this report will favour the encouragement of national production in the form of erection of a large national studio. It is not known to what extent the Government will subsidise its erection. The question is closely linked up with the programme for the provision of national work for the relief of unemployed technicians and artists.

Meanwhile, the independent directors have started on some new films.

Charles Dekeukeleire has begun shooting a big feature film *The Bad Eye* in Flanders. The script of this picture was specially written by the well-known stage writer Herman Terlinck.

Belgian films will be shown at the 1937 Paris Exhibition: films by Henri Storck, Charles Dekeukeleire and André Cauvin.

Dekeukeleire has been given the production of a film on *Belgian Folklore*, and Cauvin, formerly an amateur, will begin his first documentary, *Bonne Cherè*.

Henri Storck is now working on three new documentaries dealing with tourist propaganda.

Louis Cuny—Realist

Louis Cuny, former architect and decorator, is making real-life films in France. These are not travelogues and not educationals. Cuny does not believe in superimposing a film-story on the subject he chooses and in his opinion the function of real-life films is rather to direct the minds of the audience than to force information upon them. He writes his own commentary and dialogue because he has no love for "beautiful phrases" and he uses words sparingly.

L. Cuny has made a film about Montmartre and a laboratory film for the Board of Education and he is planning a new film to be called *La Jeunesse de France*. This will be shot in the open air and will adopt the *reportage* method. Actors will be used but no "stars."

Chenal plans Pirandello script

Future plans of Pierre Chenal, the French director, include the screen adaptation of one of Pirandello's early novels, *Il Fu Mattia Pascal*, and preparations for filming a de Vere Stacpoole novel.

Pierre Chenal believes firmly in the importance of knowing just what the camera is capable of doing and he served a seven years' apprenticeship as his own cameraman, during which time he produced a number of silent instructional films.

In 1932 he shot his first feature film, *La Rue Sans Nom*, the film that has often been compared to Pabst's *Freudlose Gasse*. Two years later he shot Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, and afterwards the Jack London story *Les Mutinées de l'Elseneur*. Both these films suffered from censorship. In the latter the French censor cut the laughter of the Chinese steward who pours vitriol on the face of one of the mutineers and one of the knock-outs of a member of the crew.

British Sponsors buy French Air

by our Paris Correspondent

The Ullswater Committee and subsequently the Government have devoted much space to the problem of sponsored broadcasting. Attempts are afoot to persuade the French government to ban advertising programmes directed at British consumers. These overtures will meet with powerful opposition both from listeners dissatisfied with the B.B.C.'s Sunday programmes and from the sponsoring interests; for the present position of French commercial radio, outlined in this article, indicates that advertisers see in broadcasting one of the most potent instruments of modern publicity.

There are twelve private transmitting stations in France, the best known of which are *Poste Parisien, Radio-Cité, Normandie, Midi, Nimes, Maroc* and *Algiers*. An additional station, *Radio-Fer*, provides a service to express-trains running in all parts of France. Most of these stations are owned either by finance groups, electrical concerns, or newspapers.

The operation of private transmitters is regulated by the law of March 19th, 1928. This law lays down the right of the French government to purchase any transmitter if it is dissatisfied with the nature of the material broadcast from it. It lays down that no licence shall be granted for a period of more than five years, and that all licences shall be issued to indvidual persons who shall be approved by the French Post Office.

Licences are not transferable, nor may the transmitters themselves change hands without government consent. Later legislation forbade the alteration of wave-lengths or the increase of aerial power without Post Office permission. Should increased power be allowed, a tax of 200 francs is imposed on every additional kilowatt. Further, a 10 per cent tax on all receipts from sponsored programmes is payable to the local authorities in whose districts the transmitters are situated. In case of mobilisation the government has the right of instant requisition of all transmitters.

The strict nature of this legislation, coupled with the fact that the Post Office has several times during the last six years attempted to take over commercial stations, makes it clear that the Government is gradually trying to absorb these transmitters into the State service and so gain a broadcasting monopoly.

Poste Parisien and *Radio-Normandie*, together with the powerful *Radio-Luxembourg*, which lies outside French territory, are the three commercial stations which most closely concern British listeners, since they are easily received in this country.

Poste Parisien was established in 1924 under the ownership of the newspaper "*Petit Parisien*." In 1932 the station was taken over by the Compagnie Générale d'Energie Radio-Electrique. It may, however, be assumed that the "*Petit Parisien*" still maintains a degree of control since several of the newspaper's directors, including Julien Coudy (Managing Director), have remained on the controlling board of the station.

Radio-Normandie, a recently built and splendidly equipped station, is at present owned by the Société Anonyme des Emissions à Fécamp, though it is said that M. Legrand, proprietor of the Benedictine liqueur company, has an important financial interest in it. The programme side of the station is linked with the Fédération des Radio Clubs de la Haute Normandie. Both *Poste Parisien* and *Radio-Normandie* derive a large part of their income from British sponsors. The whole of Sunday and a considerable part of weekday air-times are devoted to programmes in English.

Radio-Luxembourg, transmitting on a wavelength of 1304 metres, is the most powerful of the private stations operating from the Continent. It is owned by the Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Radio Diffusion, but interested financially are "*Le Journal*" and the Agence Havas, the great French newsagency which recently acquired the newsreel "France Actualités." The studios are situated in Luxembourg City and the transmitter is at Junglinster, ten miles away.

During the last two years a host of British firms, including motor manufacturers, cosmetic suppliers, food producers, tobacco companies, department stores and travel interests, have bought time in the Luxembourg programmes. The time-rates are based on a carefully worked-out schedule according to the domestic timetable of English households. The rate may rise to approximately £600 per hour for the most favourable hours of Sunday.

Advertising wordage is restricted to 190 words for an hour's programme, 160 words for a half-hour programme and 95 words for a quarter-hour. A large percentage of the programmes are prerecorded in the London studios of a British film company; in other cases a complete cast may be flown across to give a quarter-hour programme.

Though the Quai d'Orsay maintains official silence on the subject, it is frequently said that an agreement exists whereby the French government may take over *Radio-Luxembourg* in case of war, should other transmitters on French soil be endangered or destroyed. It is understood that the station is equipped with a duplicate transmitter system, and has a three-year oil storage capacity.

Television Screen for Cinemas

The Scophony television company have recently given demonstrations at their Kensington laboratories of televised pictures projected on to a screen measuring 5 ft. by 4 ft. Definition, light, and general picture quality are reported excellent, except for a slight tendency to flicker, which Scophony intend to correct by raising the projection speed from 25 to 50 pictures per second. The system works on 240 lines.

The company is now experimenting with a receiver-projector designed to screen a picture 13 ft. by 10 ft. This, if successful, will give a well-defined image of approximately the same size as an average cinema screen.

It is understood that Scophony's intention is to develop the 5 ft. by 4 ft. model for use in public viewing-rooms and schools, and to exploit the larger model in cinemas. Installation in cinemas will be completed, according to Mr. Sagall, Scophony chief, before the television of the Coronation in May, 1937.

B.B.C. events

Saturday, Aug. 1st, 4.55 p.m.: Olympic Games. ★Opening ceremony. NATIONAL.
★7.5 p.m.: Salzburg Festival. Orpheus and Eurydice. (Conductor, Bruno Walter.) NATIONAL.

Sunday, Aug. 2nd, 2.30 p.m.: Piano recital, Meyer Rosenstein. NATIONAL.

Monday, Aug. 3rd, 3 p.m.: Brooklands racing. NATIONAL. 4.55 p.m.: Olympic Games. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Aug. 4th, 8 p.m.: *The Breadwinner*. (Maugham. Producer, Gielgud.) NATIONAL.

★Wednesday, Aug. 5th, 9.50 p.m.: *Night Shift*. (Feature Programme. Beachy Head Lighthouse.) NATIONAL.

★Thursday, Aug. 6th, 8.45 p.m.: *La Vie Parisienne*. A. P. Herbert. REGIONAL.

Friday, Aug. 7th, 10 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra. Mozart, Glazounov. (Conductor, Boult.) NATIONAL.

★Saturday, Aug. 8th, 7.55 p.m.: Promenade Concerts, opening night. (Conductor, Sir Henry Wood.) NATIONAL.

Sunday, Aug. 9th, 9 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra. (Conductor, Barbirolli.) REGIONAL.

Monday, Aug. 10th, 8 p.m.: Promenade Concert. Wagner. NATIONAL.

★Tuesday, Aug. 11th, 8 p.m.: *Wings over Westralia*. (Sieveking.) REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Aug. 12th, 8 p.m.: Variety. Bobbie Comber, Claude Hulbert. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Aug. 13th, 8.45 p.m.: *Top o' the Tower*. From Blackpool. REGIONAL.

Friday, Aug. 14th, 5.25 p.m.: Olympic Games. Rowing. NATIONAL.

★Saturday, Aug. 15th, 10 p.m. *Thucydides' Sicilian Expedition*. (Felton.) NATIONAL.

Sunday, Aug. 16th, 6.45 p.m.: Recital. Pouishnoff (piano). Betty Bannerman (mezzo-sop.) REGIONAL.

Monday, Aug. 17th, 3 p.m.: Third Test match. Oval. NATIONAL.

★Tuesday, Aug. 18th, 8 p.m.: *Love and Friendship*. (Jane Austen.) NATIONAL.

★Wednesday, Aug. 19th, 8.45 p.m.: Pithead Story. REGIONAL.

Thursday, Aug. 20th, 8 p.m.: Promenade Concert. Debussy-Ravel. REGIONAL.

Friday, Aug. 21st, 9.25 p.m.: Variety. George Beatty. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Aug. 22nd, 1.45 p.m.: Ulster Grand Prix. NATIONAL.

★Sunday, Aug. 23rd, 5.20 p.m.: Chamber music. International String Quartet. NATIONAL.

★Monday, Aug. 24th, 8 p.m. Musical play, *Never Talk to Strangers*. (Gertrude Lawrence.) NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Aug. 26th, 8.45 p.m.: *Salubria*. (Norman Edwards. Producer, Gielgud.) REGIONAL.

★Friday, Aug. 28th, 9 p.m.: *Enoch Arden*. Henry Ainley. Hamilton Harty (piano). REGIONAL.

Saturday, Aug. 29th, 8 p.m.: Promenade Concert. Bach, Grieg. REGIONAL.

Sunday, Aug. 30th, 6.45 p.m.: Recital. Beatrice Harrison (cello). REGIONAL.

★Monday, Aug. 31st, 8 p.m.: *Friday Morning*. (Gielgud. Producer, Creswell.) REGIONAL.

Problems of Sports Commentary

by George Audit

Relays from the Olympic Games this month offer a fine opportunity to B.B.C. commentators. Commander Woodroffe and A. M. Wells will handle the general eye-witness stories, while experts like Abrahams and Howard Marshall are broadcasting accounts of the actual events.

Several years' broadcasting of sports commentaries should have taught the B.B.C.'s Outside Broadcast Department something by now. Are they exploring the technique of their job? Do they ask whether one sport comes over better than another, whether one tone of voice is more intimate than another, whether a specialist is more suitable than a lay reporter? Is there any checking up on experience?

On Derby Day, 1926, the B.B.C. tried to broadcast the rattle of horses' hoofs from a concealed microphone at Tattenham Corner, the shouts of bookies and tipsters and the comments of the crowd. Sheets of rain drowned everything but the attempt had been made. Ten years later a microphone was concealed under the turf at Tattenham Corner: there were no crowd effects, no bookies' orations. A comparison of scripts shows that the commentary was almost identical in form. O.B. work was alive and growing until the B.B.C.'s pioneering spirit fossilised into an inert routine. Harold Abrahams on athletics, Nickalls and Squire on the Boat Race, and George Allison on football, were all exciting because they were all keen on the new method of telling people about their own game. There were failures, but they learned from them.

Since that time the broadcasting of commentary on other sports, like polo, tennis, darts and hockey, has shown that the nature of the sport has something to do with the success of the broadcast. It certainly determines the style of the commentary. This fact was lost sight of when the B.B.C. relayed the last Cup Final. In all ball games the centre of interest follows the ball. In describing football, where the ball moves rapidly from one player to another and there are twenty-two players' names to handle, the commentator has a peculiar problem. That problem is complicated by two other factors: a network of rules (offside, handling ball, etc.) and ninety minutes suspense before the result of the game. The broadcast of the last Cup Final was an interminable gabble of names. "Male gets his head to the ball; Male to Roberts; Roberts to James; James heads back; Bowden is coming through." Half-an-hour of that sort of talk and confusion passes into monotony.

Perhaps the best sport for radio commentary is boxing. Bob Bowman's excellent description of the last Petersen fight set a high standard. He made you feel you were actually sitting in a ringside seat. He talks to people sitting behind. He tells you the comments of spectators alongside. He takes endless pains to make you feel on the spot; running round to see what the fighters look like, persuading people in the audience to come to the microphone. He combines an intimacy of voice with great fluency and a flair for noticing important details. He was assisted by the nature of the sport—only two participants, both widely publicised; a fairly small audience without too much shouting; the whole fight broken into short, independent "rounds" which allow cross-chat in the intervals.

Commentary on the last quarter-of-an-hour of the Darts Championship was another recent success. I have never hit the board with a dart in my life but I enjoyed every minute of that broadcast. The commentator was a proletarian and an expert player who obviously knew the others intimately. "This is big Bill so-and-so; works on the railway; got a throw like a sledge-hammer"—against the whispered excitement of the crowd waiting for him to hit the double-seven and win the match.

Anybody who has heard American radio commentary, particularly by Ted Husing, knows how it can trick you into fancying you are on the sports field. The Americans know that the specialist at the game is not necessarily the best man to describe it. They have developed a reporting technique the basic parts of which are fluency of expression, a friendly tone of voice, a sufficient knowledge of the game, and an eye for significant details. They are also not afraid of bringing the crowd into the microphone. In this country commentators have failed to provide an adequate ear-picture of tennis, football (with the exception of Mr. Allison whose personality makes up for a lot), or racing because of their inflexibility and lack of technique. If some of these gentlemen could forget themselves and their specialised knowledge for the duration of the game, if they could get amongst the crowd and develop an eye for typical incidents, if they could remember that the nature of the game is bound to impose certain restrictions on their method of presentation, we might expect to hear some exciting sport. I want a Harry Hopeful on the sports field instead of a talking examiner. We shall expect to hear something better from Berlin.

New form for Comedy

When are we to get successful radio comedy? We need a campaign about it at the B.B.C. At the moment the programmes are heavily overweighted by serious stuff. The usual explanation is that the Corporation believes its métier to be uplift and education. Perhaps. But I am sure that if comedies came over as successfully as thrillers and fantasies we should get more of them. Why don't they? Mainly because nobody has yet discovered a technique for comedy acting in radio plays.

The acting which suits serious plays on the stage needs very little adaptation for the microphone. But comedy acting in the theatre depends on using voice in contrast to gesture and expression. The actor says one thing in words and allows his movements and behaviour to betray something quite different. So if all you do in producing radio comedy is to put stage comedians before the microphone you halve its effectiveness. If you want proof listen to *The Breadwinner* on August 4th. Ronald Squire plays the lead. He is an unusually successful broadcast actor; his voice comes over well and his diction is beyond praise. Yet the air of gaiety and the sparkle have gone.

If comedy is to take its proper place in the programmes radio producers will either have to handle comedy acting differently or they will be forced to find a form of comedy which is as purely radio as the Disney cartoons are purely film.

GRACE WYNDHAM GOLDIE

B.B.C. Consolidates Television Plans

The B.B.C. have not yet specified the date of commencement of television. Sir W. Womersley, Assistant Postmaster General, recently announced that the equipment at Alexandra Palace was still in process of installation, and that trial demonstrations could not be expected before the latter part of August.

If the installation engineers can hold to this schedule, September should be devoted to testing, and public transmission should begin on or about October 1st. Approximately £180,000 has so far been spent on the London television scheme.

The appointment of a skeleton production staff has been completed. The jobs are: Production Manager, D. H. Munro (ex-studio executive, Broadcasting House); Producers, Cecil Lewis, Dallas Bower and Harry Pringle; Assistant Producer, G. More O'Ferrall; Music Director, Hyam Greenbaum; Stage Manager, Peter Bax; Film Assistant, Major L. G. Barbrook; Booking Manager, W. G. Streeton. The staff salary bill, including directorial and executive salaries, is reported to total over £15,000 a year.

During July the new employees have undergone a course of training in the general knowledge of sound broadcasting. They have visited all the departments of Broadcasting House, and have been schooled in the code and customs of the B.B.C. It is understood that most of them are eagerly looking forward to the completion of this part of the curriculum, and to their transference to Alexandra Palace on August 4th for more advanced and possibly less formal instruction in television itself.

The B.B.C.'s original intention of opening an official public viewing-room in London has now been dropped and the field is left open to commercial firms. The Great Western and Southern Railways, twenty West End firms and a Piccadilly restaurant have applied for advice in the equipment of viewing-rooms. A B.B.C. memorandum, issued for the guidance of such applicatnts, includes the following recommendations :—

"Details of the receivers which will be on the market are not yet known, but it is estimated that in most cases the screen will be of such a size that about 20 to 30 persons will be able to see the picture simultaneously. A suggested arrangement of seating consists of five rows of seats with eight seats per row, the front row being about five feet from the picture. The receivers will be operated from the mains.

"The main sources of interference which may be experienced are the ignition systems of motor cars and certain types of electro-medical apparatus. The extent of such interference at the receiving point can only be determined by experience. The provision of an outdoor aerial is one of the best means of minimising interference."

TELEVISION ABROAD

FRANCE.

The French Post Office is to retain its monopoly of television transmission.

The P.T.T. Television Department, under M. Massabot, began daily transmissions six months ago on the Barthélemy system. Performances of short dramatic sketches and isolated sequences from films are likely to form the backbone of the programmes for some months to come.

Meanwhile M. Massabot is planning a 'tele-

Reproduction of the Barthélemy System

vision newspaper'. His difficulties lie in the hostile attitude of the French film industry and in the technical problems inherent in the direct transmission of exterior scenes. He is therefore concentrating on the perfection of an intermediate film system whereby the scene to be broadcast is recorded on film and the processed picture transmitted some thirty seconds later.

The Compagnie des Compteurs of Montrouge is marketing a television reception set at 8,000 francs.

ITALY.

The Pope is interested in the possibility of setting up a television transmitter in the Vatican. Signor Marconi has had an interview with him during which the project was discussed. (The Vatican has for some years been equipped with a short-wave sound transmitter for use in the Catholic interest.)

HOLLAND.

The Philips laboratories at Eindhoven have been carrying out television tests on a wave-length of about 7 metres. It is understood that they plan to standardise their definition at between 350 and 400 lines.

RUSSIA.

The Television Institute of the Soviet Union is building a high-definition transmitter in Moscow. 20–25 miles radius of reception is expected, and the equipment will make possible the transmission of exteriors as well as studio scenes. It is reported that a further station is contemplated for Leningrad.

GERMANY.

Two-hour evening transmissions are continuing in Berlin on a 180-line 25-picture system. Public demonstrations are given on a large screen in the Telefunken theatre. Meanwhile research is in progress for the designing of a high-definition 300-line system.

TELEVISION TESTS ONLY AT RADIOLYMPIA

The 1936 National Radio Exhibition will open at Olympia on August 26th. Over 100 firms will exhibit, and attractions will include broadcast performances by B.B.C. stars and demonstrations of the new 'rainbow tuning' system by which the accurate tuning of a given station is indicated by coloured lights in the set.

But the main question which manufacturers and public alike are asking is: "Will television sets be seen working at the Exhibition?"

As far as the radio industry is concerned, no difficulty exists. Several firms have already begun the small-scale production of sets, and specimens of these will almost certainly be on show. But programmes will be lacking. The B.B.C. has once more been forced to postpone the television dateline, and all that is likely to be on the air during the Exhibition is a series of tests from Alexandra Palace. Such preliminary tests are hardly likely to be a reliable advertising medium for the industry's new wares.

Meanwhile a certain amount of dissatisfaction is growing within the trade at the continual announcements in the press and in speeches that television will never replace sound broadcasting. Lord Hirst, at a recent meeting of the General Electric Co., said: "When television is available all will have to submit to a darkened room, and those who wish to enjoy the entertainment must give themselves over to it and sit in front of the television screen. My opinion is that television will supplement radio but never supplant it."

It is felt that such statements, by constant repetition, will mislead potential buyers of sets and will build up the impression that the British trade is either unable or unwilling to face up to television demands, thus creating a favourable market for imported sets of foreign manufacture.

U.S. Government checks on Television

"Sound radio is used, not only as a primary source of entertainment and education, but also as a background while reading, resting, working or playing bridge. Looking at television requires concentration."

So spoke James M. Skinner, president of the Philadelphia Storage Battery Co. (makers of Philco radios), when giving evidence before the U.S. Federal Communications Commission's recent enquiry into the possible competition of television with movie, radio and press.

"Furthermore," pursued the Philco chief, "the gregarious instinct of the human race to gather in crowds is fundamental and will never be changed by television or anything else."

David Sarnoff, president of R.C.A., was inclined to agree. He asserted that the present sound broadcasting service would contine uninterrupted, and that television, when it becomes a commercial proposition, must seek new fields of entertainment. He pointed out that the American people have $3,000,000,000 invested in home radio sets.

William S. Paley, Cloumbia Broadcasting chief, boldly challenged conservatism. "Columbia is getting ready for television," he announced. "The American public have a right to expect from us a major contribution to the benefits they may receive from television and every other appropriate advance in the technique and the art of broadcasting. I promise such a contribution to them now." He went on to plead for sound economic development of the new art in view of the huge sums which must shortly be sunk in it, and for adherence to the competition principle to ensure to the public a constantly improving service.

T. A. M. Craven, the Commission's chief engineer, told of the battle of American research men to harness the higher reaches of the frequency-spectrum. Though it was now difficult to operate up to 30,000 kilocycles, he stated, there was no reason why frequencies of several million kilocycles should not be used in the future. He hinted that the U.S. Army and Navy were interested in high-frequency development and might seek reservation of certain parts of the spectrum for their sole use.

PHOTOGRAPHIC HANDBOOK 1936

edited by G. P. Kendall and Frank Whitby (Newnes 3*s.* 6*d.*).

An informative collection of articles on all aspects of still and movie camerawork. It is designed for the amateur worker and provides much interesting information and gives many direction points for the beginner. The still section is excellent, but the movie section tends to be scrappy.

£100,000 SPENT ON SUPER PRODUCTION
HUGE SALARIES PAID FOR STARS
ENORMOUS EXPENSES DURING LOCATION
AND YET! WITH THE TRADE-SHOW A FEW DAYS OFF
AN IMPORTANT 'SHOT' HAS BEEN OVERLOOKED——*PANIC*
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THREE EXPERTS GIVE VIEWS ON COLOUR

Robert Edmond Jones, Colour director, "La Cucaracha," "Becky Sharp," "Dancing Pirate."

Anthony Gross, Film Cartoonist.

S. John Woods, Abstract Painter.

The point about colour in films, according to Robert Edmond Jones, noted colour designer, is not whether it is here to stay or not. He is emphatic in his belief that the colour film will soon be a standard item, and that the black-and-white film will be in about the same place as the silent movie is today. The point to which Jones has pushed on is this: now that we have colour, what shall we do with it?

Most of the technical problems of colour are now either solved or in process of being solved by continual experimentation. There is no worry as to whether colour will eliminate some actresses and favour others, for the art of make-up has solved that. Only the eyes present a colour problem, with light, pale blue eyes remaining an unsolved difficulty to the colour-film makers. "The Hollywood actress today goes through a series of tremendously elaborate tests under lighting." Several weeks of that were consumed on Marlene Dietrich.

With "La Cucaracha," "Becky Sharp" and the recent "Dancing Pirate," first colour-musical, behind him, Jones is interested less now in the technical aspects and more in the mental ones. What can he do with this new medium? "Do you remember in the silent movies," says Jones, "how, when a gun was shot, someone backstage might give the sound effect by hitting a leather cushion with a buggy-whip? Suppose, in a colour film, you suddenly let the screen flash red . . . wouldn't that be what you might call your 'colour effect'?"

Colour, Jones believes, has an emotional effect like that of music, and should be used sparingly and subtly, with the real bursts of colour being saved for climaxes. He is interested in the effects that can be obtained by "cutting" with colour, contrasting tone with tone, and leading up to "a final 'bang' " of colour.

"Many important people in Hollywood are a bit naïve about colour films," he says. "They seem to believe that now that the colour process has been perfected they can rush right in and make important colour movies. That is not true. The difficulty, however, is not a mechanical one. It is not behind or in the camera, but before it. Obviously, the camera must reproduce whatever is placed before it, and this requires much painstaking study. The colours photographed in many scenes may be very beautiful and highly satisfactory when considered by themselves, yet not harmonise, the one with the other. Music in sound pictures 'aets' as an actor does. Colour will ultimately 'act' also."

After the premier of "Dancing Pirate," produced by Pioneer Pictures and distributed by RKO Radio, colour-designer Robert Edmond Jones will go back to Hollywood, where, in addition to his activities in the colour field, he will resume contact with the stage which made his work famed. With Walter Huston he will discuss plans for the screen version of Sinclair Lewis's "Dodsworth," in which Huston starred, and then they must plan for the presentation on the New York stage in the Fall, under the producing ægis of Max Gordon, of "Othello."

* * *

ANTHONY GROSS, now making cartoons for London Film Productions, has made a reputation in the most diverse fields. In 1925 as an infant prodigy of seventeen he exhibited his pictues in those venerable establishments—the Royal Academy and the Paris Salon. During the Riff War he travelled through Morocco with a paint-box; a little later he went to Spain where he achieved fame as a bull fighter.

From his history it is obvious that Mr. Gross does not fear such facts as wars and bulls, so in the cinema he has no fear of the new bogey, colour. He says, "We must face it." But not blindly, nor with the picture postcard's regard for natural colours. Of all colour films, Mr. Gross selects "Cucaracha" as the one which the future will remember as "a gem" because natural colour was not allowed to be too natural.

As a painter, Anthony Gross goes to the Tate Gallery to estimate the value of colour in the past,

Anthony Gross

and to find those painters who have something to teach the producers of colour films. He chooses the pre-Rafaelites, "because," as he puts it, "they were working at the time when photography was first invented, and because of this they see the Renaissance photographically."

Mr. Gross finds their colours are photographic, for example they used a blue which is almost a Technicolour blue; while such a painter as Wallis is distinctly cinematic in the conception of his picture "The death of Chatterton" in the Tate.

In making colour films, Anthony Gross feels that it is necessary to use very definite colours, in order that each figure will stand out clearly. For example, Miss A. should always be dressed in blue, while Mrs. B. is easily discovered because her special colour is red: the pretty blonde wears pink, the old woman black, and so on. In this way, colour is built up from a utilitarian point of view to assist in the delineation of character in place of being incidental.

"Though this use of colour may sound primitive," continued Mr. Gross, "it is no more so than the cinema itself. It is, in fact, making the same use of colour as Chaplin does of baggy trousers and bushy moustaches, which we have by no means outgrown."

* * *

S. JOHN WOODS, abstract painter and authority on abstract art on which he has written extensively, tells *W.F.N.* that though he believes in colour for abstract films, he is against its use in naturalistic films. "Because, since the cinema is essentially a synthetic form, colour's only practical assistance to naturalistic films is to make them more like picture postcards; and they have nothing to do with art, and not much to do with entertainment."

Mr. Woods finds that the average person is practically unconscious of colour. "Posters give a key to the general level." But from a study of them he thinks that there is a slow but definite growth of interest in colour. For example, if this were not so, the statistical posters of transport in the underground, in which a basic design carried out in different colours according to subject, would have been unpopular and too 'modernist' for the general public. "This, I think," continued Mr. Woods, "leads one to suppose that there is a potential audienee for coloured films provided colour is used properly."

Before colour can be used in anything but an incidental manner, Mr. Woods thinks there must be a great deal of research into the psychological effect of colours. "Most people are unaware of this psychological effect although it is continually reflected in our idioms. For instance, we must have an idea in our minds when we say such and such a thing in 'pure white', 'dead black', or use the description 'purple passion', 'green with envy', 'seeing red' and 'feeling blue'. Again, we all tend to associate yellow and green with spring, and brown with autumn; while we use such adjectives as 'happy' to describe a particular colour. We also have the tradition of pink being the colour for a baby girl and blue for a baby boy."

John Woods also considers the question of colour and sound; the correct synchronisation of yellow with the sound of the piccolo, and the obviously wrong synchronisation of yellow with the note of the double bass.

"I find that correct synchronisation depends on vibrations. In high notes the vibrations are quick while in a high colour like yellow there is a rapid vibration of light. Therefore the sound of the double bass would be in greater harmony with the colour effect of dark brown sacking than enamel of the same colour on a highly polished car.

"All these associations must be studied in the development of the colour film, and laws created so that a precise form can be evolved."

Puppet film makers busy in U.S.S.R. and Germany

FAIRY TALES AND SATIRE

TWO YOUNG GERMANS, the brothers Diehl, are at last reaping the rewards of careful research, of long hours and patient study in successfully producing talking puppet films. Their films are made entirely with puppet actors. They have found a method of constructing the bodies so that they will retain any normal position without support. This has done away with the necessity of using strings as with marionettes, or any mechanism to make them move.

Amazing patience is needed, as a single exposure is made of each phase of a movement separately. Careful study was made to find the right material that would make a good picture; hard material cracked and soft material shrunk under the heat of the powerful lamps used for filming. A tiny scratch would appear to be a huge scar or a minute wrinkle, a deep furrow. The heads of the puppets are modelled by expert sculptors, each face having an almost uncanny amount of character; an 'aristocrat' is given a high forehead and an aquiline nose; an autocratic, intolerant man has a deep chin and narrow lips. A mechanism was invented whereby the chin, mouth and eyelids can be moved, giving the appearance of speech and altering the stereotyped facial expressions. The saying "The camera never lies" applies even more acutely to filming puppets; it reveals everything which is faked. Great trouble is taken to have every detail correct. In the films of modern-day, you see and hear a car travelling; hear a radio working; a telephone-bell shrill—everything as correct as it would be in an ordinary film with human actors. In the fairy tale films—in which these Germans are specialising, each historical detail is correct: armour, swords, etc., made by a goldsmith, are copied from museums as also are the clothes.

Having seen these puppet films, I was amazed at the smoothness of the movements and synchronisation of speech and music. One scene of a film depicts a race over a mountain by a puppet on foot and another in a car. You see the puppet get into the car, hear the engine start and the car move off—you next see the one on foot taking short cuts, climbing the sides of the mountain, hand over hand. Each movement is so smooth and naturally done it is difficult to realise that the actor is anything but human. To see one puppet climbing and jumping over a rock precipice while the other races round the mountain road in his car is to realise anew the amazing possibilities in this new field of film-endeavour. In these films the puppets never appear to be anything but puppets; the producers relying on making the world they move in as real as possible.

These two Germans started by making publicity films and short stories and having them shown in the ordinary cinemas. Recently, they have produced three-reel films taken from Grimms' and Hauff's Fairy Tales, which so interested the Reich that they have ordered five hundred copies of one film for exhibiting in the State schools.

Russia, also, has produced a puppet film after two years of tedious experiments. It has one human actor—a boy of fourteen—and three thousand puppet players. A full-length film, of eight reels, it is entitled *The New Gulliver* and deals with Gulliver's treatment at the hands of the Liliputians from a modern angle.

The picture is based on "Gulliver's Travels" by Jonathan Swift, and none of the sarcasm is lost by its interpretation by puppets and the use of modern methods of warfare and transport.

The original puppet was three inches tall and had to submit to the most gruesome humiliations of amputations and pinchings before the proper material was discovered which would yield to the necessary manipulations to form the different expressions. The players, the outcome of careful and patient study, are minute puppets made of wood, metal and rubber. They are no bigger than your little finger. Each of these dolls are perfect in every detail; all their joints move, even their fingers, which need a microscope to be seen. All the usual human emotions are registered on their tiny faces: hunger, courage, anger, elation and fright. These puppets have no hidden mechanism. A separate 'shot' is taken of each movement, about twenty-five shots being required to make a puppet lift a hand. You can get some idea of the patience required when you realise a 'frame shot' is a section of a film an inch high and an inch and a quarter wide. Each of the chief characters have as many as two to three hundred sets of heads, capable of expressing emotions and reactions difficult to obtain if only one plastic face had been used to each.

Gebrüder Diehl Film

"The New Gulliver"

No little credit goes to Lew Schwartz who composed the music in the film. It was not easy to make the orchestra, composed entirely of puppets, play in tempo with the action and the pace of the film. Mr. Ptusko, the director of the film, said :—

"Our greatest accomplishment was the achievement of harmony between all the parts of this completely experimental film: *i.e.*, between subject and content, between the acting of the dolls and of the living hero, between artificial settings and real nature."

It is bewildering to watch the boy Gulliver being gassed and hauled through Liliput, bound to tractors. In another scene, his legs are used to form an arch for a tricycle parade of Liliputian soldiers.

G. BRETON-SMITH

MAKE THAT VILLAGE A STAR (For the Amateur in the Country)

BY ANDREW BUCHANAN

"I would begin the film with a close-up of a signpost bearing the name of the place, shot from a very low angle."

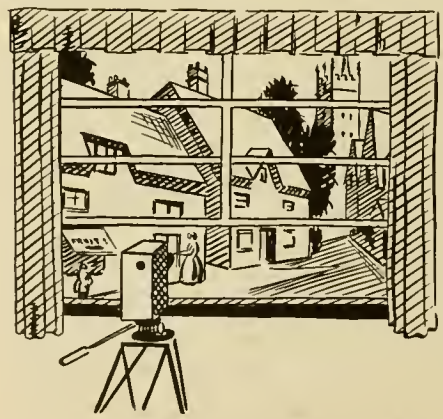
I CAN THINK of nothing easier for the amateur to film really badly than a country village, a pile of ruins, or a cathedral, for, on the surface, his story is ready made, and the cottages, or the stately spires, reduce the necessity for picture composition to a minimum. Consequently, there is little left to do but shoot "views" famous to all tourists, pan up and down steeples, and use filters that make the sky jet black, and the buildings snow white. Maybe life will be so utterly still in these parts that the producer will feel it necessary to introduce "movement" into his scenes, and so he will induce his sister to appear in every shot, wandering about like a sleepwalker —strolling through arches, crossing roads, or leaning heavily over old bridges.

Apart from ruining sequences in this manner, it is probable he will not attempt to capture the spirit of the place, because he did not begin by studying it. Now, it is a surprising fact that immediately one regards the city, town, or village, in which one resides, through the eye of the camera the place becomes, or should become, transformed into something unfamiliar—by reason of the countless features accentuated by the inquisitiveness of the lens—all of them creating, *together*, the fundamental character of the location, and unless that character and/or atmosphere is captured, and projected on to the screen, the film can be of little importance. I advise the amateur to remember that.

The second point is that a village need not be *famous* before it can be filmed. I have a preference for places which have rarely been heard of, save by the inhabitants. Rarely does the professional producer discover an utterly unknown girl and lift her to stardom. It would be better if he did, instead of concentrating only on established stars, casting them irrespective of suitability. Similarly, the amateur should not film "the renowned beauty spot," but should give prominence to the unknown village, discovering its hidden beauties, and emphasising the part it plays, however small, in the life of the nation. Leave the famous places to makers of picture postcards, and concentrate upon that tiny hamlet you found by accident when on your way to somewhere else. But whatever its character may be, it has to be approached with extreme care, and not shot from any angle, anywhere.

A stranger becomes acquainted with a place only after he has wandered around its back streets for a few days. He would learn nothing about it by standing at the top of its main street and staring at the view before him—which would be the equivalent of the conventional opening Long Shot that begins every poorly made scenic film. And so the first step is to study the location, and prepare a simple script based on one's observations. Why does the village appeal to you? How do the inhabitants earn their livings? Are they mainly agricultural? Do they depend on the sea? Is there a tannery there? Whatever the main occupation of the villagers may be, you will find signs of it in unexpected places. Look for them, and list them down.

I would begin the film with a close-up of a signpost bearing the name of the place, shot from a very low angle. If it is a fishing village, I should follow the introductory shot with several well-chosen close ups, beginning with one in which sea waves filled the screen—rolling on the beach, or dashing against the harbour wall, followed by strong hands mending nets, sorting fish, and painting old boats. The effect of these shots would be increased if they were divided by shots of gulls swooping for food on the quayside, perched on mast tops, or floating around the anchored fishing boats. Such brief scenes create a prologue to the film, and plant the fact that the village whose name was seen on the signpost is a fishing village. Do not worry about long shots at this stage. Introduce the place to the audience gradually, each series of shots revealing more and more, so that by the time a long shot does appear, everyone will be able to *see into* it with understanding, having meandered around the streets beforehand.



"Camera peeping through windows and open doorways."

And so now we have emphasised the dependence of the villagers upon the sea, we should take a look at their dwellings, and we might well begin with a few studies of their trim little back gardens, for the back of a house always reveals more about its inmates than the expressionless front. We will find that the sea invades them in the form of shells set, a trifle too decoratively, in borders—coral heaped by kitchen doors—and, perhaps, an anchor, or a rusty mine, perched up in the middle of an unpretentious bed of flowers. These shots might be taken to include glimpses of the cottages behind, but a few should certainly be filmed from within, the camera peeping through windows and open doorways. Maybe one of the womenfolk would agree to wash her vegetables in the doorway, so that we may observe her type—for, until now, we have concentrated solely upon the men. Next, we should wander into the street, and take a look at the front of the cottages and if a seagull should be perched on one of the chimneys, shoot it, and list it down to be inserted between your back garden shots. If an old fisherman, now retired, spends his days sitting by his porch, shoot him, too, and also the entwined hearts tattooed on the back of his hand, which is gripping his blackened pipe.

Such details help enormously to create the true spirit of the place. Where do these folk buy their food and clothes? In a cluster of tiny shops round the bend. We go there. The sun blinds are down and flap furiously, for the wind is forever blowing in these parts. We take a close-up of one flapping. It will cut in neatly with a flapping sail down in the harbour, and that flapping curtain in a cottage window. These three shots, together with a glimpse of the sky filled with scurrying clouds, will make the audience almost feel a draught in the theatre.

We are now justified, I think, in taking a carefully selected long shot of the village, with, if possible, the shops in the foreground, and a glimpse of the cottages somewhere in the background. That should give one the impression of having walked round the village and, on strolling away, of taking a last look back over one's shoulder. But in this long shot we see, for the first time, the village church behind the shops. That is most important, and so we approach it in the next shot, but we do not pan from the top of the steeple to the bottom of the main porch. Instead, we begin our survey with at least half a dozen close studies, which analyse the worn stonework, the windows, the old entrance, interesting tombstones, and the tower. Then we take the camera back to embrace the entire building. This enables us to see the quiet beauty of

Wealth of the Home Libraries

THE SUBSTANDARD libraries are going to be the repertory supply of the future. This fact arises from a survey of the current catalogues of the home-movie libraries. Progress to date has admittedly been by guesswork. Quantity of supply and not quality of films has been the guide to most library build-ups. Thus in Pathéscope, Kodascope, Ensign, G.B. Equipments, Western Electric and Visual Education film lists you will find the sweepings of the studios, mostly British, on 8mm., 9.5mm. and 16mm.

But you will also find some of the most important films of movie's history. How they got there is nobody's business. To find *The Covered Wagon* in 6 reels in between five episodes of *The Indians are Coming* and *Somehow Good* in 8 mm. Kodascope, will defeat all those who cock a snook at the home-movie field. William Wyler's *Hell's Heroes* is another discovery. Unobtainable on 35mm. from Universal, Kodascope list it at 17*s.* 6*d.* a night for 5 reels.

This is just an aperitif. Turn to Pathéscope. Here are most of the "classics" of the German golden period—*Destiny*, *Caligari*, *Cinderella*, *Siegfried*, *Vaudeville*, *Metropolis*, *The Spy*, *Faust*, and *Chronicle of the Grieshuus* (not shown in this country theatrically)—all on 9.5mm. going into hundreds of homes. Whether these miniature versions of one-time great films differ from the original theatre versions is not stated. Other odd and interesting subjects are Griffith's *Orphans of the Storm*, Riefenstahl's *Blue Light*, Fanck's *Pitz Palü* and Volkoff's *Kean* in the same library, while Kodascope keep pace with the "classics" by listing Lubitsch's early *Sumurun* (under the title *One Arabian Night*) and Hitchcock's *The Lodger* and *Blackmail*.

As you might expect, all libraries are strong in comedy. Most early Chaplin's of the Mutual and Essanay periods, including the immortal *Pawnshop* and *Easy Street*, are on Kodascope 16mm. So also are good examples of Raymond Griffith, Harold Lloyd, Ben Turpin, Snub Pollard, Laurel and Hardy and Harry Langdon. Ensign offer *Safety Last* (Lloyd), *California Straight Ahead* (Denny) and *Saturday Afternoon* (Langdon), as well as a handful of very early Chaplin's under disguised titles. Cartoons are plentiful. Early Disney's, both Mickey and the Symphonies, Mutt and Jeff, Krazy Kat, Felix and the famous *Out of the Inkwell* series supply a history of the cartoon unobtainable on standard sized film.

In the non-fictional class, British documentary has so far not reached beyond the well-known G.P.O. and Royal Empire Film Libraries, but a star entry in Kodascope is Schoedsack and Cooper's *Grass* and Alex Shaw's cruise films are held by Western Electric. G.B. Equipments supplement an orgy of their parent company's feature films by a selection of G.B.I.'s educationals and documentaries, including the *Face of Britain* series and Mary Field's farm films. *Man of Aran* is also given. Nearly all Andrew Buchanan's *Cinemagazines* are recommended as good additions for the Gebescope family party next Christmas. Kodak is strong in industrials, copies being presented by the firms in question. Best known among these are Levers' *Port Sunlight* and the Cadbury films. The supply of casual travel films is astounding. No city in the world appears to be missing from the "interest" class of all substandard libraries.

Most plentiful of all, however, are Westerns, suitable for the whole family, ranging from Hoot Gibson in *The Rawhide Kid* to Art Accord in *Rustler's Ranch*.

The bulk of the supply is silent but G.B.E. and Western are catering exclusively for sound. It is only waiting for some ambitious firm to make a really good sound projector marketed at a low price for the whole movement to spring alive. The Lord Moyne Committee heard some anxious questions about the growth of the home-movie field. Exhibitors may well be apprehensive if the substandard libraries are once organised on an imaginative basis. Till now the movement has been haphazard. It cannot always be so. The real fight will come when the producing firms, egged on by the exhibitors, will refuse to sell the substandard rights of their features even if they are old enough to be useless. Then the libraries will have to begin thinking for themselves.

WE HOPE THAT

London films will make up its mind once for all about *Conquest of the Air*.

* * *

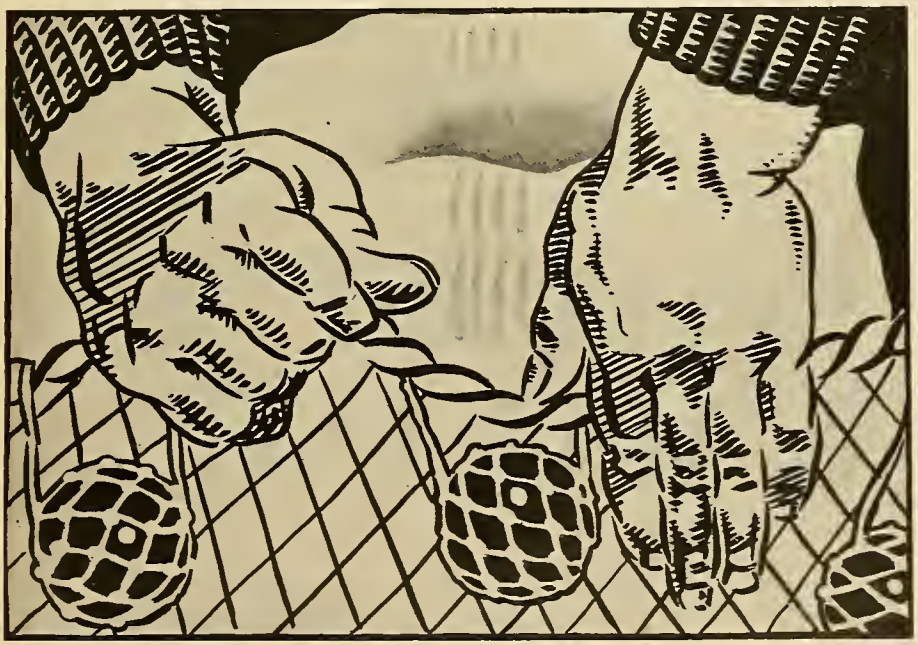
The Board of Education will commit itself—even a little—on the subject of Cinema.

MAKE THAT VILLAGE A STAR (cont.)

the churchyard, enhanced by ancient trees, with branches bent so low as to almost touch the few flowers sturdy enough to face the winds, which grow out of the sunken stones. These create a somewhat softer picture, in comparison to the sea and the harbour, and serve as a link to introduce the rural beauty which comes to view as we journey inland.

A farmstead lies to the right, and cows are slowly plodding past a broken gate, to be milked. A cart, laden with hay, ambles by, leaving a trail of straw on branches and hedges. A few pieces of straw clinging to the hedge are worth a close up, for whilst the camera turns, the wind snatches them away—another reminder. In a Shoot an additional shot of sky alone, to follow the ploughman's close-up. The next shot is of a fisherman, in a similar position to the ploughman, also shading his eyes and scanning the sky—a simple example of associating images, enabling us to return to the sea. A long shot reveals him standing on the harbour, gazing anxiously out to sea. A close-up of mammoth sea waves, dashing angrily against the harbour wall, follows, and the urgency of life in this village is vividly felt.

Now, instead of ending on this fierce note, one might return to the churchyard just in time to see an old fisherman's wife walking slowly up to the entrance. She pauses, and looks up at the sky.



" Followed by strong hands mending nets "

rising field horses are ploughing. The camera, tilted downwards, captures an impressive close-up of the soil being sliced and turned over. Then a medium shot shows the ploughman pulling up his team, so that he may gaze at the sky. It looks threatening. Next a close-up of the ploughman, his hand shading his eyes, scanning the sky. A close-up of her face reveals her anxious expression, and if this is followed by a shot of the sky, the cause of her anxiety is clear, whilst a medium shot, taken from an elevated position to dwarf her figure, shows her resuming her walk into the church, which reveals her refuge from the elements—a quietly impressive ending.

'WHEN THE DOCUMENTARY FILM

——*deals with real life in a way which is vital and entertaining . . . it can no more fail to secure a circulation among the public than does the well-edited and keenly-written newspaper. . . .*'—*THE CINEMA* (22/1/36).

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——*have set ourselves out to be specialists in making realist films of Industry, Education and the work of Government Departments which will be entertaining as well as instructive, which will be gay as well as dramatic.*

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Short Films may Feature in New Quota Act

THE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE which is now discussing the Quota Act has paid marked attention to the lack of short films in the theatres. Producers of short films—and not least of these are the public relations departments of Government and industry—may find that one result of the enquiry is to make the exhibition of a proportion of short British films compulsory.

The spokesmen for short films have brought out some interesting points. They claim that short films represent:

(1) a training-ground for directors and technicians;
(2) an experimental ground for new ideas;
(3) a more powerful medium for the description of British life and manners to audiences at home and abroad than is offered by long films;
(4) a preparatory ground for television;
(5) an opportunity for social education within the ordinary limits of an entertainment programme.

The great question in the past has been to get these short films into the theatres. For a dozen reasons it has been difficult. The spread of the two-feature programme has made two features, newsreel, and an occasional cartoon the rule in three thousand theatres out of Great Britain's four thousand four hundred. The remaining thousand or so one-feature theatres are available to shorts, but because they are situated for the most part in the smaller towns where people go early to bed, the prices paid for short films are not high.

Anybody who invests more than £500 in a short film will have difficulty in getting his money back. The market pays for an average short from £700 to £900. When distribution costs are taken off and a small profit allowed £500 is the figure which remains for production itself.

There are exceptions, of course. Some short films may become featurettes and break into the big three thousand. The latest example of this is *Night Mail*. But, by and large, the shorts people have a thin time under present conditions.

Proposals recently made for improving the position are various. They may be tabulated as follows:—

(1) Make it compulsory to show one British short for every four American or foreign shorts.
(2) Make it compulsory to show a percentage of short films in every programme.
(3) Make the exhibitors pay a reasonable price for short films so that shorts producers will be encouraged.
(4) Prevent the renters from throwing in shorts with feature films as they now do and discourage the exhibitor from treating short films as fill-ups to be booked by numbers.
(5) Break down the programme limit of 3¼ hours now insisted on by renters so that an extra short can be fitted in to the two-feature programme.

Not all these suggestions are practical, but they demonstrate at least that the shorts people are fighting for a place in the programme and mean to have it.

One factor in the situation must interest every public relations officer. Some of the best of the short films in recent years in this country have been sponsored films made by public relations departments. *Contact*, *Air Port*, *Industrial Britain*, *Night Mail* and *Weather Forecast* were all sponsored films. And so long as these sponsored films represent genuine entertainment they have been welcomed in the theatres.

Any additional opening in the theatres which may come from a revisal of the Quota Act will serve as a further incentive to sponsors. The short film is their opportunity. They can afford to spend more money on their films than the ordinary commercial operator. They can afford to be more ambitious in their production technique. They can even afford to lose on production so long as the film is good enough to earn wide circulation.

The sponsors have everything to gain from a larger theatre demand. And everyone from producer to exhibitor must welcome their participation. They bring money for production. They introduce new subject matter. They encourage experiment in technique. The only rule that will be forced on them—and this is rigid—is that they must keep direct publicity out and follow the ordinary tenets of entertainment.

Travel Association Projects Britain Abroad

THE TRAVEL ASSOCIATION Film Unit is having great success abroad with its films. New markets are being opened up in which all short films descriptive of the British scene are likely to benefit. *So This is London* is circulating in sixteen countries. Scandinavian theatres have given these travel films an especially warm welcome. Other countries that have taken distribution are South Africa, Australia, the U.S.A., France, Latvia, Finland, Mexico, Japan, Spain, Czecho-Slovakia.

The Travel Association operates in the general interests of British travel and industrial development: drawing its funds partly from the Government and partly from the interests affected. Films are only part of its publicity work. Through all British Embassies, overseas wireless stations and sub-offices on the Continent, it carries on a widespread service of information on Britain's attractions and Britain's industrial facilities. It operates with the British Council, a body closely related to the Foreign Office, for the promotion of cultural relations with foreign countries.

Holiday resorts and industrial development councils have in the past looked to the Association for much of their guidance on film matters. For four years the Association has operated its own production unit and built its own library of films. Its theatrical successes include West End premières.

Head of the Travel Association is L. A. de L. Meredith, C.M.G., O.B.E., one-time official of the Department of Overseas Trade. His chief aide is A. F. Primrose, O.B.E. The Travel Association unit represents one of our most valuable avenues to understanding abroad.

Is your CORNED BEEF* as popular as CLARK GABLE?

Why not? You can use the same medium—the sound-film. We can put your product on the screen in a way which will make it acceptable to an audience in its most receptive mood.

*OR YOUR BISCUITS, OR YOUR CIGARETTES, OR WHATEVER YOU MANUFACTURE.

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Religious Barnstormers Sidetrack Church Films

WE ASKED Aveling Ginever to tell us about the churches. Would they make religious films or films of social service? Would they try to put their films in the theatres? Would the Methodists work with Anglicans or break loose into Evangelical sob stories?

Aveling Ginever is an expert. He has seen the growth of the religious film movement from its beginning. He has made more films for the churches than any other producer: films like *Mastership*, *Service* and *In Our Time*. He discusses the psychological problems of religious

Aveling Ginever

appeal with the detachment of a man who has heard all the sectarians in full cry and knows their differences.

After five years in the troubled politics of the Church he finds Wardour Street quiet to the point of gentility. He does not see how under the present policy the Religious Film Society can be a binding force on the various denominations. The differences of outlook are too deep.

The situation at present is that the Religious Film Society attempts to combine the film energies of both Methodists and Anglicans. It is the executive body of the Cinema Church Council and the Missionary Film Society, on both of which all denominations are represented. But except for the relatively small matter of subscriptions, finance comes from one source. That source is Rank: miller, Methodist and millionaire. And having spent £25,000 on the cause, Rank calls the tune.

The Religious Film Society has turned out four films—*Mastership* and *Service* by Ginever, *Barabbas* by Sloane, and *The Common Round* by Rank's commercial organisation, National Films. All of them were Methodist chosen and Methodist made. The Anglican church may have cathedrals and seats in the Lords, but, on the Religious Film Society, it is a poor relation.

Ginever says there are two bases on which co-operation between the churches is possible. If they would allow the artist to interpret religion on the screen, they would find a common ground. If they directed their efforts to social service, they would again find a common ground in the health and housing and welfare of the people.

But the churches, it seems, have not been willing to trust the artist; and the quiet educational atmosphere of social service has not seemed exciting enough for the more evangelical spirits.

As in education, the development of the religious film has been greatly hampered by the exhibitionists. The barnstormers and the showmen have seized the opportunity of film to increase the appeal of their services. For the time being they have focused attention on the more melodramatic uses of film, and the more penetrating uses are being lost sight of.

It is difficult to see how the Anglican church can agree to the methods of, say, the Rev. W. H. H. Lax. Its "mystical content" is not expressed in quite the same way. Lax presents his gospel in terms of men picked from the gutter, saved from drunkenness and wife-beating and, after a "glorious spiritual resurrection," brought to "honour and success."

If the Religious Film Society is to represent a collective force, says Ginever, it must make its appeal on deeper grounds than these. The solution would seem to be that sectional interests should be followed sectionally. The Religious Film Society, as the combining unit, will have to take its stand on the common ground of social service, and on a really æsthetic interpretation of a common Gospel.

From "In Our Time"

News Review

Public relations pictures are booming. 1937 crop of productions completed or scheduled already exceeds 100. One company alone has schedule of 53.

* * *

Austin Motors have another quintette of one-reelers under general title *The Road Leads On*. Four of these are in the cutting room; fifth nearing completion. Productions supervised by J. F. Bramley, Austin film executive; photographed for Publicity Films by T. R. Thumbwood.

* * *

Chocolate and custard will be the dominant themes of two other programmes, sponsored by the houses of Cadbury and Bird. Bird's entry into public relations film field not unconnected with experience of Cadbury. Bird's Merchandising director is George Cadbury, younger son of cocoa family.

* * *

Willard Van der Veer, ace cameraman of Audio Productions Inc., leading public relations film producers in U.S.A., on a visit to London in connection with an Anglo-American film assignment. Enthusiastic over progress made by public relations units in last three years. Declares the technical work on this side of the Atlantic is now equal to that of U.S. (except in cartoon field). Admits that U.S.A. has nothing equivalent to British documentary school. Van der Veer is one of eighteen members of the 78 Club, band of hardy men who have been 78 degrees North *and* South of the Equator. He filmed Byrd's first expedition to Little America.

* * *

Large patent medicine combine likely to be the next entrants into the film propaganda field, with a scheme running into five figures.

* * *

Paul Stein, who completed *Cafe Colette* July 20, supervising unusual public relations film for Garrick. Details next month.

* * *

Cape Town Railways and Harbours Board reports: "In the field of film propaganda, an agreement was completed whereby the sound films produced under the auspices of the Administration are placed on circuit throughout Great Britain." Describing showing of abridged version of Witwatersrand gold-mining film at London Plaza, the report adds that "the resultant publicity for South Africa cannot be overestimated." This London showing was arranged by International Productions Ltd.

* * *

Further reports from South Africa indicate that a "new and comprehensive publicity film 10,000 to 12,000 ft. in length" is now being prepared. It will depict "principal historical and scenic features of the Union, and give a brief representation of present-day living conditions." Symphonic music is being used in place of commentary wherever possible, to overcome the language difficulty.

* * *

Sunderland the next Northern town to star in propaganda film. G.B. to make a picture stressing its historical and industrial associations.

Sydney Box

Before During After

Colour puppets perform Horlick miracles

The Film Department of J. Walter Thompson Ltd. has sponsored the first of a series of advertisement pictures for Horlick's Invincible Malted Milk. It is *On Parade*, a puppet film made by George Pal (his work in Holland for Phillip's Radio was reported in *W.F.N.'s* third issue), with amusing sound effects and music by Debroy Somers. The film was made in Pal's studio in Eindhoven, Holland, but the sound track and Gasparcolor process were added in England.

On Parade is a great step forward in Pal's work. There might be years separating *Ali Baba* and *On Parade* instead of only a few months. The use of colour is far more decisive (which would also indicate that Gasparcolor has progressed). The general speed of Pal's manipulation of puppets has increased and he has eliminated all unnecessary embellishments. This picture is bound to affect the attitude of the most average audience towards advertisement pictures, with the result that the scope for the production of such pictures will increase. The propaganda is never obtrusive, and the picture in itself is always entertaining although it never deviates from its line of advertisement. A regiment of soldiers are barracked in a fantastic castle, they are all lax, the bugler cannot blow, they would all like breakfast in bed; on parade they fall asleep, even the General's horse is yawning. The doctor is sent for and diagnoses them as suffering from night starvation. Horlick's must be the remedy. Horlick's is, and after six weeks every man is A1 instead of C3.

The most interesting advance in Pal's use of wooden puppets is that he has greatly improved their facial expression. Previously his figures had the character of toys. In *On Parade* one begins to see the possibility of developing a character which might become as famous as Felix or Mickey.

New film public acclaims sponsored pictures

THIS WINTER will show a vast development of film shows outside the theatres. The larger operators, having checked up on last winter's experiments with the educational groups and other social organisations, are likely to double their activity. An incentive to development is the new interest shown by the churches. A dominating factor is the tendency of lecture clubs to substitute film shows for personal discourse by itinerant lecturers.

It is reckoned that the number of lecture syllabuses in the country run to nearly a hundred thousand and that halls available or devoted to periodical group gatherings run well over the fifty thousand. The potential audience for films of educational or cultural programmes may be reckoned from these figures.

Add the halls of the churches to the halls of the social service societies, to the halls of the literary clubs, to the meeting places of the business groups and the youth groups and the women groups. Add together the anxious, earnest and interested little gatherings which, under the chairmanship of vicar, schoolmaster or local litterateur, ponder over every problem from art to archæology. The sum total would appear to run into millions.

This, at any rate, is the vista which the propagandists and educationists are now reaching for. Operators like the Post Office and Western Electric have a large number of units covering village halls on a one-night-stand basis. Alternatively they run seasons of films in central halls and gather their audiences from the societies by special invitation. Last winter, at a fair guess, an audience of seven millions was covered in this way.

It is not too early to suggest that there is not one cinema industry, but two: the industry of popular entertainment and the industry of popular education. The split is deep between the two, with little or no cross-reference.

The entertainment industry remains exclusively concerned with entertainment and profoundly ignorant of the new development. The non-theatrical field is developing its own specialised producers, its own machinery for exhibition, its own type of film and its own basis of finance.

That financial basis is largely a sponsored one. Publicity, propaganda and public relations finance, which in the U.S.A. runs to the sponsorship of radio programmes, finds no such outlet here. It is moving to film and the ready-made audiences of the non-theatrical halls.

Gas, electricity, posts, the B.B.C., chocolate, tea, milk, cars, travel, newspapers and Dominion Governments are finding the funds for the new cinema. Glass, steel, and money are tentative beginners, though there is some probability that steel and money will join gas, electricity, posts and travel as principal operators. The British Government represented now in posts and agriculture may be bound sooner or later to bring in health and labour.

Most spectacular of the developments in this field is the fact that sponsorship is for the most part on educational and not on entertainment lines. Certain attempts have been made to mix direct selling with a popular programme of entertainment films but the general impression formed is that standards of entertainment have been lower than those of the local cinemas, and therefore ineffective.

When sponsors have followed educational lines they have found themselves fulfilling a public want not now met by the theatrical people. Many are now scrambling to find an educational or social approach in the material they handle. Air, road and rail are sponsoring travel: gas is sponsoring diet and health; electricity is sponsoring housing; chocolate is dispensing geography and life on the farm. Posts have run up the banner of civics.

On this basis public relations officers are finding considerable exercise for their imaginations. The possibilities are clearly enormous. Still in the market for sponsorship are popular science, physical culture, mechanics and craftsmanship, personal hygiene, child welfare and a dozen other major fields of interest.

In the meantime a great new audience is being formed. It is in fact forming itself. It is not a rich audience though in five years it may be. But from the point of view of sponsors it already represents a golden field of opportunity. The more progressive among them are taking advantage of it, to the general benefit of education and the community.

CONTEMPORARY POETRY AND PROSE No 4 *contains*

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and contributions by

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● Not that it is heavily political, for variety is the key-note. The August issue includes four stories—among them Mobilisation Day by SILONE, author of Fontamara . . . four pages of cartoons in holiday mood . . . Best Left Books . . etc. . . 64 pages in all.

For teachers only

Teach from Living Facts

Civics is a means of relating the essentials of education to the constantly changing needs of the adult world. Its present status in the schools falls short of this, for the fallacy of educating for past needs still holds sway. So the teacher who wishes to push his teaching of history, biology and geography beyond the 1900 mark is being led into the Civics field in fetters. He is dinned with the word "Reconstruction" and told that he must make again a world in which the engineers, the technicians and the other employed workers can take their place, or, alternatively, he is bade keep them happy until this reconstruction has been made.

Isolated efforts to tackle the problem are indicative of a growing desire to organise the material of citizenship teaching. One limit characterises them all: they are founded on and bounded by the classroom technique. New material is taught with the old instruments—instruments which have produced the lag between the school world and the real world, and the resultant teaching is inept because the instruments of the classroom technique are not supple enough to be adapted to the rapidly and constantly changing content of the material of Civics. The present classroom method permits only of the teaching of the forms of the modern world and not the stuff that it is made of. It can teach political divisions from maps and books but it cannot teach the social process because it cannot teach from the living fact.

We need an elastic instrument which can not only transcribe life but can recreate life and interpret it for us—an implement supple enough to MOVE with the ever-changing social process.

Here is our need, and the social process is our material, but where is our instrument? This has been answered in some measure in the new documentary films and echoed a little in actuality broadcasting.

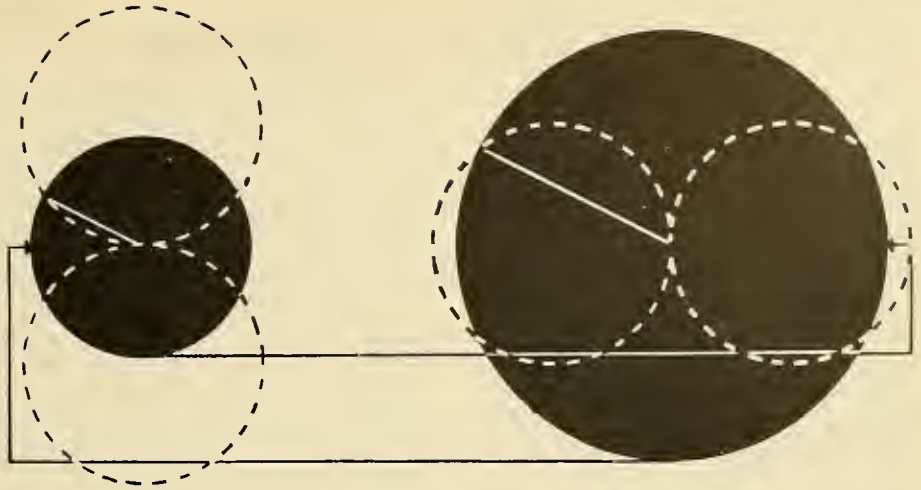
The documentary (or actuality) method is one to bring alive the real drama latent in everyday life. For the sociologist it is the means of bringing alive the people to the people. It has the advantage over the lecture system, or the classroom system, of providing not merely the best alternative to actual experience but something which is in itself a complete experience of actuality. It can give a new experience of life; if the experience is enhanced by art its material is the fact. In the material we have the living fact, the necessary condition of teaching Citizenship.

In film is that supple instrument which can not only transcribe and recreate the facts of the time but can interpret the spirit of the time. The discovery of printing by the scholar made classical education possible; the discovery of film by the teacher may yet make Civic education a reality. Film is the instrument with which we may bridge the gap between the technique of the classroom and the new demands of the contemporary essential.

The films are in existence. The need is there.

T. B.

This subject will be dealt with more fully in our forthcoming educational supplement.



Mathematics Comes to the Screen

$\ddot{x} + x = 0$

THE MATHEMATICAL FILM referred to in the last number of *W.F.N.* by Fairthorne and Salt, is finished.

To the unmathematical, without the help of teacher or blackboard (which are intended by the producers to supplement the film), the message it tells is not clear, but it is of importance to teachers of mathematics from the higher certificate grades and upwards. The producers are publishing a leaflet to accompany the film which is, of course, silent.

It puts Salt into the front rank of animators. The technical work of the moving diagrams is excellent. It is rivalled only by Three-Minute Films' film on the Sinusoidal Pendulum.

The film is full of interest even for the mathematically unenlightened. One can take it as straight abstract and even in this class it stands ahead of previous work. The reason is not far to seek. Ruttman's abstract films and films like them had an arbitrary rhythm of their own, imposed by the director according to his whim; the ordinary spectator could find no rhyme or reason for the changing shapes. Fischinger's films have a very definite rhythm, but a rhythm superimposed on them by the thythm of the musical accompaniment. They have no visual rhythm of their own. Without the music they are just a lot of rather incomprehensible sparks and lines and dashes.

Moholy Nagy tries to get rhythm into his abstracts by building a machine with certain arbitrary laws of movement of its own. His films have no relation to the outside world, though every now and then they tie up in a literary way with the world of machinery. (Legg used a portion of Moholy Nagy's film with success to open up his, *The Coming of the Dial.*)

Treated as an abstract Fairthorne's and Salt's film has movements determined by certain universal laws of mathematics. They have the precision and rates of change of the equations from which they are adapted.

It should be noted that differential equations are used to measure not amounts, but *rates of change*. And out of this fact springs the beautiful movement of the film—varied, harmonious, with an inner logical rhythm which has not yet been achieved by any other abstract director, because no abstract director has before built his films on the actual underlying rhythms of the world.

We quote below extracts from the leaflet published by Fairthorne, because by reading it one can gain some inkling of the attitude of the directors to their material.

THE EQUATION $\ddot{x} + x = 0$

Notation—Robert Fairthorne.

Animation—Brian Salt.

This film is to be regarded as a working model. It is, in fact, a set of moving diagrams rather than a complete film with definite beginning, middle and end. In order to avoid interference with the teacher's individual method and particular needs, it contains no explanatory subtitles.

The basic element of the diagram is a disc, of variable radius, rotating at constant speed. From the perimeter of this disc unrolls a string, whose length is therefore equal to the integral of the radius with respect to the time. The principle is the same as that of wheel and disc planimeter, of which the diagram is a simple form.

Two of these discs are shown. The radius of one represents the acceleration, so the length of string unrolled represents the velocity. This string determines the radius of a second disc, which is therefore proportional to the velocity. The string unrolled from the velocity disc represents the distance, and is arranged to determine the radius of the first acceleration disc so as to satisfy the equation. At all instants the radii of the two discs will satisfy the equation, so the motion of the diagram represents the solution.

The diagram and its motion make immediately evident:—

1. The meaning of the relations symbolised by the mathematical equation.
2. The symmetry of the relations. The velocity and the distance may be interchanged with only an alteration of phase.
3. The inevitability of periodic roots. If the second term had a negative coefficient, that is, if the discs turned in opposite directions, the discs would increase or decrease in size definitely. . . .

. . . Throughout the film a white disc represents a negative quantity, a black disc a positive.

Copies of this film, on 35 mm., 16 mm., or 9.5 mm. stock, can be obtained from—R. A. FAIRTHORNE, Kirk Michael, Hillfield Road, Farnborough, Hants.

A. E.

Music and Microphones

BY WALTER LEIGH

A FEW YEARS ago some experiments were made on the Continent with music specially written for broadcasting and gramophone-recording. Interesting results were obtained, which were however not taken up by the broadcasting and gramophone companies, and the idea of providing music adapted to the needs of domestic mechanical entertainments has been abandoned. Improvements in apparatus are eliminating problems of orchestration, and already any music, short of the largest choral and orchestral works, can be reasonably well reproduced on either radio or gramophone.

Nevertheless, however greatly the tone quality of mechanical music is improved, the essential character of such music remains that of an enlarged miniature. With the loud-speaker, all the sound proceeds from one small spot; in the concert-hall, the orchestra is spread over the platform, and the sound is heard in perspective. The confusion caused to the ear by the loud-speakers installed in some large theatres, when the actual sound from the stage is heard simultaneously with the amplified sound, illustrates this point.

In film music, experiments with the microphone have been encouraged by the demands of drama. A particular sequence in a film may conceivably be better served by, say, two performers on the comb-and-paper and a third on an old tin can, than by a whole symphony orchestra. The film composer has in fact an infinite variety of sounds to choose from, and need not be tied down to the conventional orchestra for his effects. Indeed, he need by no means use the same orchestra throughout a film: fragments can be recorded separately on different combinations and fitted together afterwards.

Experience shows that a small orchestra, in which each individual instrument can be heard, is more effective for film-music than the large symphony orchestra which is still so often considered necessary for a really expensive production. A huge climax with drums rolling, brass blaring and fiddles whizzing about in mad excitement, so thrilling in the concert hall, will as likely as not only come through as a nasty rasping noise in the cinema. Probably a single drum and a trumpet would be adequate to produce the same effect, in combination with the picture. For the excitement is in the picture: the music is not there to create it, merely to support it.

The question of what instruments are particularly suited to the microphone, and whether others should be eliminated, admits of no final decision. It is recognised that at present strings are less satisfactory in film-recording than wind instruments, though for broadcasting and the gramophone they are excellent. Trumpets similarly lose most of their brilliance through the loud-speaker. Drums suffer very badly, and the rhythm in ordinary dance-music is best left to the guitar and string-bass. Timpani must be used with care as they can easily confuse the ensemble. On the other hand, gongs, cymbals and bells can be used with great effect.

But beyond restricting the size of the orchestra there need be no particular limitations imposed on the film composer. Rather should he realise that the microphone brings many possibilities unknown to the concert hall. He may if he pleases, combine a trombone with a jew's-harp, or eighteen saxophones with a mouth-organ. Simplicity, clarity and economy are virtues in all music, but doubly so in film-music. The worst thing a film-composer can do is to overload the microphone. The familiar type of hack orchestration, with its "doubling-up" and "filling-in," is useless for the film. Film-music must be written specifically for performance through the microphone, with full regard to its various needs and possibilities. It is fairly safe to say that film-music which makes a good concert-suite will be bad film-music.

Nijinsky was film-minded

The almost hysterical enthusiasm of English audiences for ballet has this year reached unparalleled heights, infecting hitherto reliable critics with its indiscriminate inaccuracy and causing staid publishers to pour forth torrents of books all full of the same anecdotes.

This whole situation is rather like movie ballyhoo, and all that are needed now are a few Danilova, Lichine, and Nemtchinova fan clubs and a Louella Parsons to organise the gossip of the dance world.

In actual fact this year's season has done no more than to reiterate both the faults and excellencies of the de Basil company, and to introduce us to two new ballets by Fokine. These were *L'Epreuve d'Amour* which showed Fokine at his best and was distinguished by a glorious decor by Derain, and *Don Juan*, about which the less said the better. Fokine's company, under the ægis of Rene Blum, underlines once again the tendency to carelessness in corps de ballet and ensemble work which took place after Diaghilev's death, and from which the de Basil company is by no means free.

Turning to happier aspects, there is no doubt that there has seldom been a better set of individual dancers. Blum has Nemtchinova, Eglevsky and Kirsova and in the de Basil company are Danilova, Toumanova, Baranova, Verchinina, Guérard, Massine and Lichine—and, most superb of them all, Riabouchinska, who will soon be one of the greatest dancers of the age.

The most striking moment of the season was the reappearance of *L'Apres Midi d'un Faune* in the de Basil programme.

This twenty-five year old Nijinsky ballet has much in common with the technique of the most advanced sound films, in which visuals and sounds intrinsically different combine to give a unified impression. Debussy's music, acme of lush romanticism and exquisitely scored, is

played against the coldly classical movements of Grecian nymphs before a plain blue backcloth. The resemblance to film is intensified by the two-dimensional quality of the choreography, for the movements were developed by Nijinsky from a study of Greek friezes and vase paintings and are always directed across the stage, never backwards or forwards. The faun himself (very beautifully danced by Lichine) acts as a link between the two elements. His movements are also two-dimensional but there are frequent hints of a more earthy attitude towards sex than the strictness of the dancing would suggest.

It is a masterpiece which no film director should miss.

Film people might also agitate for a revival of *Apollo Musogetes* in which Balanchine reached similar ends by a quite different route.

CARLOS MARSDEN

Weill Scores Pirate Fantasy

From W.F.N.'s New York Correspondent

Kurt Weill, composer of *Mahagonny*, *Happy End*, and the German *Beggar's Opera*, is at present in New York completing the musical score for the film of *A High Wind in Jamaica*, by Richard Hughes.

Weill finds a strong appeal in Hughes' fantasy about a pirate vessel with a shipload of English children. The film is an independent, produced by John Krimsky, who earlier financed Dudley Murphy's *Emperor Jones*, and introduced *Mädchen in Uniform* to Broadway.

Weill's score is not continuous. He prefers, he says, to use song surreptitiously, as an invocation, something as beyond speech as poetry is beyond prose. None of his singers are principal characters in the story.

An ardent Disney fan, he believes that the Mickey films finally established the principle of film music, in which the composer must also be a dramatist, must evolve a give-and-take between score and script.

"I object to the Hollywood musicals," he adds. "They are still afraid of not explaining where the music comes from. Hence the Grace Moore–Lily Pons cycle. They have forgotten the strange, the mysterious, the voices that dictate to us in dreams —all the essentials of real romanticism."

Since the break-up of his partnership with Bert Brecht, Weill has been almost continuously in the States. He did the score for the ill-fated Werfel–Reinhardt production of *The Raad to Promise*.

Future plans include the music for a new Jed Harris opera, based on *The Ugly Runts*. This is a verse drama for Robert Reynolds about Hungarian hunger strikers. He also plans a satirical comedy for the Group Theatre.

Personality–the Problem of Commentary

By a well-known newsreel commentator

The best man to speak a commentary is not invariably the best man to write it—but the writer's style must match exactly the vocal personality of the speaker. Vocal personality of *Universal Talking News* Jeffrey is deliberate, solid British—of *Gaumont British's* Emmott, fast, sophisticated. Each is brilliant in his own style, each writes his own script—but even better scripts might be written for them by a specialist, working in the individual style of each. The problems of speaking and writing must be dealt with separately.

In speaking commentaries the secret of real success is to create a personality. Adopt a particular style suited to the voice, stick to it, without trying to be six different commentators rolled into one. No single voice can be both *Pathé Gazette's* de Groot, heavy, rolling, dramatic—and *Gaumont British's* Emmott, light, witty, tongue-in-cheek. Hence the prime argument for two or three commentators per reel, each voice associated with a particular type of story. Both *Movietone* and *Paramount* use this multi-commentator technique, but where they fail is that their voices are too much alike, are not used with any definite story-voice coupling, are hardly recognisable individually by the average cinema audience. Where *Gaumont British*, *Universal*, *Pathé Gazette*—all using single commentators—fail, is that none of their voices can cover the full range of News Organ Stops—from "wreck of R 101" bass, to "Boo Boo's tea party" piccolo. Correct technique is found in U.S. newsreels, where voice-subject personality is fully exploited. Examples—*Movietone's* Lew Lehr (comedy), Louise Vance (fashions)—*Pathé News'* Bob Bartlett (travel), Clem McCarthy (sport), and many another.

The biggest mistake of most British editors is in thinking that the commentary can be written after the picture is cut. It cannot—and in practice never is. When the editor discusses with the production manager and cameramen—days beforehand—the shots that are to be covered on the story, subconsciously the commentary is already being written. When the cameramen have unloaded, the negative has been viewed, the cutter instructed, the plan is complete. All that is left to the writer is to interpret the plan in words. Even the form of his sentences is dictated by the sequence of shots. For a real union between words and picture, this second-hand process is unworkable. Either the editor must finish the job, dictate the commentary, or the writer must control the final make up of the picture sequence, leaving only the general advance planning to the editor. One man to control make up, write, and speak, is possible in theory, but one in a million.

Another fallacy among British editors is thinking that the commentary can "carry", when really it can only "add to", the picture. At a rough estimate, the average cinema audience gives 70 per cent. of its attention to the picture, only 30 per cent. to the spoken word. Hence the commentary must follow the picture within narrow limits, not, as consistently happens, lead away, in misguided efforts to add information, atmosphere, humour. Recent example—when the zeppelin "Hindenburg" first came into the Reels, cameramen were not allowed aboard—British newsreels tried to cover this picture-weakness by letting commentators describe scenes aboard, control cabin, engines, over-shots of "Hindenburg" in the air—ineffective, because the cinema audience's attention was divided. U.S. Reels achieved the same object by using animated diagrams of the airship's interior, while commentators gave facts.

In its right place, commentary can add interest to even the best news-picture, but it cannot be used as a continuous accompaniment. Actions that are obvious from the picture need no description. Phrases—only too often heard—like, "the crowd rushed up the steps", or, "the Prime Minister laughed heartily", are ludicrous. Some editors compromise by maintaining that commentary should cover sections where sound is uninteresting. They should learn that music is a far better medium than speech, for covering the mere weaknesses of a sound track.

Almost all the commentary faults of British newsreels are due to one factor. Subconsciously most editors are still living in the trackless desert of the silent days. In their mirage, they still see picture first, commentary, sound, and music as added after-effects. Of the four equal partners of the modern cinema, one is still their pampered favourite.

NEWSREEL CLIPS

By an agreement signed between American distributors and French Gaumont, 150 American cinemas already specialising in foreign features will exhibit the first All-foreign Newsreel.

The Reel is that sponsored by the Havas News Agency.

* * *

Most dramatic Newsreel item of last month was picture of Haile Selassie addressing League conclave at Geneva. While camera rested on the Emperor, sound-men recorded storm of whistling and cat-calling from group of angry Italians.

Paramount struck a commendable note of impartiality in its handling of the Palestine crisis. Brief interviews with both Jewish and Arab leaders were included in a somewhat extensive treatment of the situation.

* * *

Credit to cameraman, Al Brick, for beautifully shot sequence of American aeroplanes manœuvring in and above clouds, included in Movietone News.

* * *

A new entrant into the Newsreel business is *Scottish News Magazine*, an independent reel sponsored by Scottish Film Productions (Ltd.). The producers, Stanley Russell and Malcolm Irvine, hope to gain sufficient support to issue the reel once every month.

GEORGE NOBLE

(No. 2 of Cameramen Series)

Delivered 34 years ago, George Noble, maestro of the documentary photography world, began his film career as assistant to Frank Grainger on a two-reel bathing belle comedy. For three weeks he was turned off Southend Beach daily. His moment came when he "doubled" for the hero and was thrown off Southend Pier only to land in three foot of water backside up.

1919 saw Noble as camera assistant to Ernest (*Chang*) Schoedsack shooting for Selznig News. Schoedsack asked George to go East on *Chang*. "Animal pictures," said George, "are suicide for the cameraman."

With elder brother Joe, he went newsreel and worked on *Daily Cinema News*, owned by Archie Mitchell, the first and only newsreel to issue daily. George and Joe were financed by Simon Rowson and Jerry Jackson to make twelve cartoons of Tom Webster drawings. More cartoons followed. *Dismal Desmond* was made for Pathé and *Sammy and His Sausage* for British Talking Pictures. These were succeeded by work on feature pictures for such veterans as Thomas Bentley, Graham Cutts, Harry B. Parkinson and George Samuelson.

Advertising then caught the Noble instinct, still coupled with a flair for cartoons. *Mr. York of York*, *Yorks*, for Rowntrees, was the first advertising talking cartoon. George and Joe also claim the credit (nobody else does) for first taking a piano and jazz band up into the air and recording over London. Still pioneering, George strayed into the E.M.B. Film Unit one day in 1932 and was taken on for half a day's shooting on a Poster Film. He stayed three years. He shot on Elton's *Voice of the World* and *Aero Engine*, Spice's *Weather Forecast*, Taylor's *So This is Lancashire*, Alex Shaw's Orient Cruise Films, and Legg's *B.B.C.: The Voice of Britain*.

Since then he has kept close to documentary. He turned with Taylor on *Citizens of the Future* and remained with Strand Films to shoot Anstey's *On the Way to Work*, Shaw's *Preface to Life*, is now working on Holmes's *The Way to the Sea*, and will go East with Shaw in the autumn on a new programme of films for Imperial Airways.

Asked what is his hobby, Noble will say: "Five-finger exercises on Wanstead Flats or trap-drum playing." In point of fact, he can drive a harder bargain than anyone else for a secondhand car.

Pola-Screen may aid Cartoonists

KODAK HAVE NOW on the market for the first time screens for polarising light. Invented by Edwin H. Land they are of two kinds. One for fitting on the camera, the other to fit the light source. Light travels in all directions. The screen polarises the light and sends it in one direction. The material for doing this consists of minute rod-like crystals running parallel to each other and is cemented between two sheets of glass. The screen is mounted in a holder with a handle. The light passes through the rod-like crystals. Each one acts as an optical slit. When you turn the handle the screen rotates and with it the direction of the light.

Here is a list of what the Pola-screen will do when used only on the camera:—

1. It controls contrast in subject (hot spots, etc.). This only works at certain angles but the range seems wide enough for practical use. If, for instance, you are working at an aerodrome and your camera is at an angle of 32 degrees to the subject, you will possibly pick up a glare from the white concrete. Put on the Pola-screen and the glare is gone.

2. It photographs through glass or water at angles varying between 32 and 37 degrees. The Pola-screen cuts out surface reflection so that you photograph straight through glass or straight down through the water. If you want increased reflection turn your Pola-screen the opposite way.

3. It subdues oblique reflection to show surface texture.

4. It acts as a variable depth sky filter and does not affect the monochrome rendering of other subjects (a filter does). The tone can be regulated by turning the Pola-screen. ("Faces, blossoms, trees, mountains, etc., can be made to stand out in a very beautiful manner against the sky," say Kodak.)

5. Two Pola-screens together act as a variable neutral density filter.

a. Two Pola-screens in front of lens with handles together are equal to a light grey neutral density filter, transmitting ·32 per cent. of the light.

b. Two Pola-screens with handles at right-angles are equal to a dark neutral grey filter, transmitting .16 per cent. of the light: with, of course, density variations between ·16 and ·32 per cent.

6. The Pola-screen absorbs ultra-violet rays and transmits the infra-red rays freely without polarisation.

7. When using a Pola-screen exact results are seen on the ground glass.

The main drawback is that it needs a four times increase in exposure.

These points are for the Pola-screen on camera alone. For normal work a Pola-screen on camera and lights does not seem to be practical. Apart from the expense, 16 times more exposure is needed. They could, however, be very useful for trick, model and cartoon work.

Jack Okey compares Denham with Hollywood

I recently had a talk with Mr. Jack Okey on Denham and how it compares with Hollywood from the Studio Designer's point of view. Mr. Okey explained that in the first place our inimitable fogs lead to a necessity for air-conditioning plant on an impressive scale, while the risk of a drenching which is run by those who walk even the shortest distance out-of-doors in this country during the season of great rains (i.e. all the year round) has called for the construction of covered passage-ways where open alleys would have sufficed in any reasonable climate. Mr. Okey referred to Denham rather as the explorer might speak of some remote uncharted native settlement. He was full of praise for the unspoilt beauty of its scenery. Nevertheless it was clear he hankered somewhat after the amenities of California—a land flowing, it appears, with main's water and cheap electricity. In default of all this he has had to install at Denham a 4½ million watt power station and a pumping station capable of delivering 1½ million gallons of water every 12 hours, to say nothing of a private sewage disposal plant.

Vast though the Denham Studios appear to us it has to be borne in mind that they are easily outstripped in size by any one of Hollywood's giants, such as M.G.M., Warner or Paramount.

It had originally been intended to build the new Technicolour processing laboratories as part of the Denham Studio lay-out, but owing to curious tribal taboos which find expression in the local building regulations it was not possible to make use of the only available site which was situated partly in Middlesex and partly in Buckinghamshire. So the laboratories are to be put up on the Great West Road.

H. D. WALEY

Cine Film on 'Phone

There will be no more high-pitched buzz-buzz-buzz-buzz noises (number engaged); no more continuous high-pitched buzzes (number unobtainable—he's been cut off because he can't pay his bill) if present G.P.O. plans mature.

An ingenious machine has been designed by the G.P.O. engineers which carries a strip of cine film. When the number is engaged or unobtainable, the film is made to pass in front of a photo-electric cell and the person on the line hears the Girl with the Golden Voice say what is the matter. The voice repeats the remark a few times.

The film is a continuous strip mounted on the rim of a turntable. All the necessary remarks are on it, and those required are picked up automatically.

Treasure Trove of Wardour St.

A YOUNG MAN equipped with camera and reflectors visited a barn near Dartford one day. For a long time the barn owner watched filming operations with interest, and finally he said: "I believe there's some kind of picture rubbish hidden hereabouts; I dunno what to do with it, perhaps you'd like to have it."

He grubbed about in a dark corner, and out of a wooden chest produced shots of Queen Victoria's Jubilee and the Coronation of King Edward the Seventh. The young man promptly bought it from the farmer, and that is how Norman's stock-shots Library was started.

All topical stuff has a historical and documentary value, Mr. Norman knows, and he makes it his business to collect records of public happenings, which he keeps and tabulates carefully for the use of ourselves and posterity. For instance, he was able to supply unique material for the 1935 Jubilee film.

From three or four tins of negative, the Library has grown into one of the largest independent in the world, being at present stocked with 15 million feet of film, to the 20 million of its American equivalent. It is the only independent stock-shot Library in England, and supplies and distributes for many big companies. Despatching is also a special feature of the organisation, and was started in 1911.

The vaults are indexed alphabetically—tins crawl to the roof labelled Ants, Aunts, Athletes, Annam, Assam, Aeroplanes, Aspidistras, etc., etc. Some of the juxtapositions are odd, to say the least of it. Mussolini rests on Medicine, for instance; and Ethiopia on top of Eden. There is also a library of sound track.

Mr. Norman has been a pioneer in other directions too. He was the first man to arrange film shows in hotels and restaurants of the day's big event—the Derby, the National, the Boat Race: that was about ten years ago. These shows proved extremely popular. It was quite the smart thing to do, either if you had *not* been present, or *had*, and could therefore superiorly comment on the incidents of the race, to see the film of it in the evening.

He also showed the first film ever seen in Court. The subject was . . . prams . . . an advertising film made by Cinads, Ltd., who were being sued for breach of contract. One wonders whether the learned judge was a wit or a married man.

Many *de luxe* trains are fitted up nowadays with cinema shows. The first time this was done was by Mr. Norman on the famous "Bussey Express" which in 1929 ran from Glenboig, Scotland, to Euston, after the opening of the Bussey Coal Distillation Plant. An eye-witness writes: ". . . after that we had seventy miles of speeches . . . Lord Elmley talked for about thirty miles . . . the Chairman, Mr. Powell, spoke another thirty miles, and one or two other speakers, including Sir Arbuthnot Lane and Mr. G. Lloyd George, M.P., got about five miles apiece; after which the guests betook themselves to the two kinema theatres—showing pictures from 2.45 onwards." *How* grateful they must have been for the silence and darkness of the said "kinemas"!

W. H.

How to Found a Film Society

BY NORMAN WILSON

NO FILM SOCIETY is the branch of a central organisation. The vigour of the movement is largely due to the fact that each society is an independent unit, spontaneous in growth, expressing the characteristics and outlook of its locality. There can be little doubt that a national organisation with a paid organiser going round the country could soon establish branches for the showing of films in every populous centre in Britain, with councils ornate with the names of local dignitaries. But such groups would lack the vitality and conviction of self-constituted bodies created by desire of the community itself.

Gratifying as the growth of the movement has been it would have been greater still if many of the people who wish to see experimental, documentary and continental films had known how to go about forming a local film society.

The procedure is comparatively simple.

First of all you must get together a small committee of people sufficiently interested in the idea to assist in launching the society. If you do not know any personally a letter to the local press advocating the formation of a film society will put you in touch with other enthusiasts.

The first task of your committee will be to approach the magistrates and ask if they would permit a society, properly constituted, to hold private film performances on a Sunday. Even if this is refused it would still be possible to run a society with week-night performances—as Manchester, Wolverhampton and Inverness have shown. Before approaching the authorities it would be as well to enlist the support of as many influential citizens as possible, so that your unusual demands are not looked upon with too great askance. Quote the examples of Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Southampton, Leicester, Newcastle, etc.

You will want to know something about financial responsibilities. These consist of two main items—the hire of a cinema and the rental of films. Allowing as a maximum £10–£12 for the theatre and £12–£15 for films (many societies are run much more economically than this) you can count on an average expenditure of £25 per show at the highest. It is simple arithmetic to calculate the subscription you wish to charge, the number of shows you want to give and the number of members you must obtain to ensure solvency.

Having decided to risk finding sufficient people in the district interested enough in good films to join the society, the next task is to launch the venture with as much publicity as possible. Enlist the support of the film critics on the local newspapers. Obtain the co-operation of whatever other intellectual bodies there are in the town—literary societies, language circles, study groups, etc. Hold a public meeting or, better still, give a free film show as a sample of the type of performance your society intends to present. (A number of excellent free films are available for this purpose.) If possible invite a well-known film personality to address the meeting. Whatever you do don't get the mayor or the provost, the Bishop, or your local M.P., unless, by some unusual chance, he has expert knowledge of films. Do not forget to make application to the Inland Revenue for exemption from Entertainment Tax.

If you want help or information write to the Secretary of the Federation of British Film Societies, 56 Manchester Street, London, W.1, or to the Secretary of the Federation of Scottish Film Societies, Mr. Forsyth Hardy, 54 Bruntsfield Gardens, Edinburgh, 12. *W.F.N.* is always glad to help.

A FREE FORUM

World Film News is the official organ of the Federation of Film Societies. In the coming months of film society activity it will devote more of its space to the problems of the societies and to the various services of information which the societies need.

We shall do so because we believe the film societies have been a power for good. They have created the reputations of directors and have given critics the only grounding they know. They have created a body of opinion for good films throughout the country which has affected production policy and may yet affect the entertainment policy of popular exhibitors. They have created all the standards on which films are discussed to-day, and by their study and enthusiasm they will create the standards of to-morrow.

Our pages are therefore gladly laid open to the film societies and their members. They may discuss what they please from any and every angle. We ourselves have no editorial policy which we wish to urge save one: *Federate—at every sacrifice of local independence, Federate; and when you have created a central discipline in your federatian see that the discipline is maintained.* Together you have great power; and you need all of it if you are to sup, as you must, with the devil.

But it is a free forum, and even the anarchists may have their say.

Many important towns already have flourishing societies. But there are dozens of others where no effort has yet been made to screen intelligent films. What, for instance, is wrong with Bath, Carlisle, Hull, Middlesborough, Nottingham, Sheffield, Worcester, York?—with Dunfermline, Dumfries, Perth and Stirling?

Even in smaller centres where it is not possible to form the more ambitious type of exhibiting society small film-study circles can be formed. Many first-rate documentary films are available on sub-standard stock, silent and sound. Numerous classic silent films, including most of the famous Russian productions, are also available on 16 mm. or 9.5 mm. Performances of these films, which are free from most magisterial regulations, could be given for a few pounds. With some persuasion and organised support the local cinema can often be induced to book some unusual shorts or one of the more worthwhile commercial features not likely to be shown in the ordinary course. The larger film societies have already shown how their influence can improve the taste of audiences; a network of such groups throughout the country might create a revolution in production, assuring producers of "minority" films the support of an immense new organised public.

NEW PORTSMOUTH SOCIETY

The trade is taking a keen interest in the formation of the Portsmouth Film Society, the chairman of which is Councillor F. J. Spickernell, delegate to the General Council of the C.E.A. C. Paice, of the Palace Theatre, is in charge of publicity.

At the inaugural meeting Councillor Spickernell stated that the aim of the Society is to show to its members those films which, although excellent in production, and often of foreign origin, it is not possible to show commercially in the city.

FILM SOCIETY FOR BRADFORD

Bradford Civic Playhouse, rebuilt after a disastrous fire, is to be equipped for talkies, so that films can be shown at any time when plays are not being staged. The new theatre seats 350 people.

As a result it is intended to form a film society to present shows on Sunday evenings. Programmes will include foreign films, documentaries and educational pictures.

Under discussion also is the formation of a production unit for the making of films in which the amateur actors connected with the Playhouse will take parts.

WOLVERHAMPTON

A decided preference for Russian films was indicated by members of the Wolverhampton Film Society which took a ballot at the end of its first season.

The list of feature films submitted to members included 14 Russian, 14 French, 11 American, 10 German and 4 British. Of the 24 films most in demand 7 were Russian, 4 French, 4 German, 3 British and 3 American.

The first ten films were *Don Quixote*, *Everest*, *Thunder Over Mexica*, *Pitz Palu*, *Potemkin*, *Berkeley Square*, *Charlemagne*, *Pail de Carotte*, *Turksib* and *The Blue Light*. Other Russian films in the first 24 were *Earth*, *Mather*, *The Blue Express* and *New Babylon*.

Preference in shorts was for documentaries, with travel and natural history equal second, and cartoons last. Strong complaint was made against Vigo's *Zera de Conduite* by some members.

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SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"I would be the happiest man in the world if there were many well-skilled scenarists available. I would have to do nothing but read what they had written, sit in my chair, smoke my cigar and be delighted. Things have not reached this state yet."—*Lajos Biro.*

* * *

"Acting is bunk."—*Gregory La Cava.*

* * *

"If I thought I could be good in pictures I would like to do it."—*Lady Warwick.*

* * *

"Folks figured that if there wasn't any 'goo goo' the kids would be disappointed. But 'goo goo' is in retirement now."—*Joe Penner.*

TELEOPTICON

(*an invocation*)

Dedicate to the Mifses J———B——— and E——— C———

Announcer Hoftefses! Co-axial Twins
Of *Televifion,* not the Children's Hour,
Reveal at laſt your aerial Origins,
And lead to *Alexandra's* leafy Bower
Wherein your *Myfteries* ye celebrate
And with the *Nobleft,* e'en with *Gerald Cock*
In ſecret make-up Teſts confabulate,
And chooſe, each one, a *Telegenie* Frock.

Say firſt, what *Programmes,* what *Variety Shows*
Ye will indite upon th'ethereal Screen.
And ſay, will Lecturers *blofſom* as the Roſe
With ravag'd Features hitherto unſeen?
Reveal! Reveal! We pant, we gaſp for *News*
And *Expectation* ſwells our hopeful Hearts
Alas! Unſatiſfied! Do ye refuſe?
The Hungry *Prefsman* unappeaſed departs
The *Telephone* implores, the *Wires* vibrate,
But ſtill great *Cock,* inexorably mute
In *virgin* Silence all immaculate
Harveſts in *fecret* his myſterious Fruit.

Sometimes a ſlender, fragmentary *Clue*
The Oracle vouchſafes. The *Headlines* ſcream.
"The *Televifion Girls* make up in *Blue*
"And daub their Roſy *Cheeks* with *Yellow* Cream."
Then Silence. In the ſtill *North London* air
The *Alexandrine* Aerial points to Heaven.
Will ye not ſpeak, divine and lovely *Pair,*
With liquid Voice official Silence leaven,
And reaſsure a *World* with waiting weary
That *Televifion* is not wholly dreary?

POTTED HISTORY CORNER

KOSHER HITLER, AMOS 'N' ANDY MUSSOLINI ACCENTS IRK CONSULS.

(*Headline in VARIETY*)

VIOLENT CONTRAST BETWEEN BRITISH AND AMERICAN PRODUCTION METHODS.

Rembrandt (Publicity Sheet).

"Gertrude Lawrence, who plays the part of housekeeper to Rembrandt, sings an old Dutch song called 'The Naughty Girls of Kieldrecht' whilst preparing the banquet in honour of the public showing of Rembrandt's famous picture *The Night Watch.* . . . In a tavern at Leyden singing and dancing will be shown to old 17th-Century folk songs and accompanied by genuine instruments of the period such as Rommelpot, Serpent, Bagpipes and Clarinet."

Romeo and Juliet (Publicity Sheet).

"Gorgeous tapestries, richly carved furniture, rich costumes, jewels flashing in the light of torches, musicians playing old dance tunes on instruments of the period."

This month's aureole of birdseed, with double-bar, goes to Major Harding-Cox, dog-lover of the Board of Film Censors, for the following pronunciamento:

"The Mongrel has no right to be born. He is an offence to public decency."

★ MONTHLY COMPETITION

No. 1.

It is reported from Hollywood that a new film, starring Freddie Bartholomew, Jackie Cooper and Mickey Rooney, is to be called *The Devil is a Sissy.*

W.F.N. offers a prize of one guinea and a second prize of half a guinea for an extract from a new section to be inserted by Milton in *Paradise Lost* to meet the circumstances. Entries should not exceed forty lines.

RULES AND CONDITIONS.

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the problem in the top left hand corner, and should be addressed to **Competitions, World Film News, Oxford House, Oxford Street, W.1.** Solutions must arrive by the first post on Friday, August 14th.
2. Competitiors may use a pseudonym.
3. The Editors' decision is final. They reserve the right to print the whole or part of any entry sent in. MSS. cannot be returned. If no entries reach the required standard no prize will be given.

★

Horrible revelations from West Regional B.B.C.

Reported in *News Chronicle.*

"The Regional Director has not yet arrived; he lives in Cardiff.

"The Programme Director is in Jerusalem, running Palestine's broadcasting.

"The Music Director is on long leave."

A Quiet Day at the Alexandra Palace

Copyright by Vicky Publications.

"WHAT LUCK WE CAN'T BE TELEVISED YET!"

LORUM

WISECRACKS AND CROSSTALK

Culled from the Report of the Select Committee on Cinematograph Films, Vol. 1.

Trenchant statement by Mr. Fligelstone (Chairman of the Cinematograph Exhibitors Association):

"There appears to be a misguided opinion about this industry that there is a wish on the part of the producers to make greater and better films."

* * *

Mr. Fligelstone elucidates further :—

"A man comes along to a town or a man is in a town, but he does not make a public issue if that is what you mean. Do you mean public issue?"

* * *

Socratic dialogue

Dr. Mallon. "Is there any other industry where the words 'gentleman's agreement' are applied to an agreement to evade the law?"
Mr. Kearney. "We always refer to it in inverted commas."
Dr. Mallon. "Inverted gentlemen?"
Mr. Baker. "We do have gentlemen's agreements in this country, because it is the habit in all industries to trust one another, and we call them 'gentlemen's agreements.' "

* * *

Cri de cœur **from the Associated Cine-Technicians.**

Mr. Cameron. "You suggest that should be made illegal?"
Mr. Dickinson. "Oh, please, that is a very hard thing."
Mr. Cameron. "You suggest that should be made illegal?"
Mr. Dickinson. "How, we do not know."

* * *

Mr. Fligelstone has another fling:—

Lord Moyne. "You say public opinion in certain areas is resentful of the increasing number of British films. Is that because they are bad?"
Mr. Fligelstone. "No, it is one of those things that I cannot explain to you in this regard. Some people like spinach and others do not."

* * *

SUPER CROSSTALK

Cue for Song and Dance

Lord Moyne. "Would it be practicable?"
Mr. Baker. "Well, it would be difficult to find the offenders."
Mr. Korda. "It would be practicable."
Mr. Baker. "It would be practicable to do it."
Mr. Kordo. "It could be done."

* * *

FRAGRANT FRAGMENT

"Between two and three thousand 'Tommies' are going into action for Gaumont-British next week. The Royal Artillery and the Engineers will be there and the latter will show their strength by building one bridge and blowing up another. Every phase of the infantry and mechanised army will be pictured in this great screen war, which will be fought, till the cameras run dry, near Stonehenge, with Amesbury as headquarters."

Oh God! Oh Mustard Gas!

DAVE ROBSON Says:—

"Whilst on a recent tour of China, I visited a village on the outskirts of Canton called Wangsee. Here I was amazed, on passing a dusty-looking cinema, to note that the feature-film billed was none other than Len Lye's *Colour Box*.

"Knowing of the controversy that has centred around this film wherever it has been shown, and of the varying interpretations placed on its conception which differ so widely, thought I, 'Here I may find the real solution'—and, believe me, I did!

"The film had just started as I entered, and inside I found a large audience gesticulating madly amid a hubbub of high-pitched, excited voices apparently expostulating their theories.

"Presently, someone in the audience shouted, 'Yen hackee sen wasee?' Then an amazing spectacle followed. Spontaneously, they all raised on their seats and inverted their trunks so that they took up positions standing on their heads, viewing the screen upside down! For a moment only was there silence, for almost immediately they burst fervently into a chant set to the rhythm of the music, terminating in a gusto of cheering and hand-clapping as the final cymbal-crash concluded the picture.

"So thunderstruck was I at this strange demonstration of approval, that I sought the interpretation from the resident American cinema manager.

"Apparently, viewed upside down, the pulsating colour-streaks represented to the Chinese an ancient psalm of their forefathers—appearing to them in the form of Chinese figure-writing so well understood by them."

Witness-eye view of the Select Committee on Cinematograph films.

TECHNICOLOUR DIETRICH

Says Richard Haestier in *The Star:* "Her pallid features, like alabaster, accentuated by scarlet lips, were perfectly moulded, but her expression was completely colourless."

(*Interruption.* "*Mummy, what is alabaster?*"—"*Sh! dear, it's the only thing Garbo hasn't got.*")

"Her blue eyes, either half closed or partly hidden by long curling artificial eyelashes, seemed visionless, suggesting that the mind behind was looking at some far off thing which the eye could not see."

(*Inspiration.* "*An eyebollful of flashes*
"*Obscures each star's horizon.*
"*Marlene alone relies on*
"*Her artificial lashes,*
"*Neath which, with happy inconsistence,*
"*Her eyes can gaze for any distance,*
"*Or still receive the brainpan's thanks*
"*By regist'ring continual blanks.*")

"Yet—and here, I believe, is the centre of her secret—she smoulders deeply within herself, but carefully preserves a veneer that is no deeper than porcelain enamel."

(*Intermission.* "*Bring me my Ming mask, Celestine, I wish to give someone the cold smoulder.*")

"She is, I think, still pale blue, mentally."

(*Inhibition.* "*My dear, I can't possibly wear that hat again, it clashes so dreadfully with me when I think of Clark Gable.*")

* * *

HINTS TO SCENARISTS

One day in Hollywood they were adapting a famous book for the screen (curious things like that are always happening out there). The supervisor was fighting like a madman for a certain line of dialogue. After several gory hours they said, "No, it comes out."

The supervisor wept. "It's the last line left from the book," he sobbed, " and I do feel kinda sentimental about it."

* * *

HORRID WARNING

"If Shirley Temple's mother had not taken her precious infant to see a movie one afternoon, little Shirley would not have been seen by the casting executive of ' Baby Burlesks,' who said at sight of the golden-haired moppet, ' I want that kid in the picture.' "

Mothers! take your children to the Zoo.

* * *

MORGUE NEWS

"Films die in a physical sense. They also shrink. They also decompose."

Lord Castlerosse.

Shrinkage of course takes place in the Box Office while decomposition sets in in the Script department.

* * *

TAILPIECE

Marion Davies' beach hut at Hollywood has twenty-four bedrooms. "*Some people like spinach and some do not.*" *As Mr. Fligelstone has already remarked on this page.*

FILM GUIDE

This guide publishes for each month the playing dates of selected films in central districts of London and the larger provincial towns. Readers will appreciate that this service is not an easy one to maintain. The indifference of some film companies to specialised films prevents this service from being as comprehensive and accurate as we would wish.

SHORTS

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppets in Gasparcolour)

PRODUCTION: Slatinay, George Pal. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

LONDON: Curzon, Curzon Street	Aug. 3–16
Tatler, Charing Cross Road	Aug. 24–30
BRISTOL: Triangle	Aug. 3–8
CARDIFF: Pavilion	Aug. 17–22
Queen's	Aug. 17–22

'Alt! Oo Goes Theer? (Dunning Colour Cartoon)

DRAWN BY: Anson Dyer. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.

BRISTOL: Regent	Aug. 31–Sept. 6
CARDIFF: Empire	Aug. 10–16

Audioscopiks

MANCHESTER: Tatler	Aug. 3–9

Carmen (Dunning Colour Cartoon)

DIRECTION: Anson Dyer. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.

LONDON: Monseigneur, Strand	Aug. 10–12
Monseigneur, Piccadilly	Aug. 10–12
Piccadilly News, Gt. Windmill Street	Aug. 10–13
Sphere News, Tottenham Court Road	Aug. 10–12
Strand News, Agar Street	Aug. 10–12

Citizens of the Future

DIRECTION: Donald Taylor. PRODUCTION: Strand Films & G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONDON: Monseigneur, Piccadilly	Aug. 10–12
Strand News, Agar Street	Aug. 17–19
Everyman, Hampstead	Aug. 24–30
GLASGOW: Cambridge	Aug. 20–22
Astoria	Aug. 20–22

The new education, from Infant to Senior Schools.

Dragon of Wales

DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

LONDON: Sphere News	Aug. 10–12
LIVERPOOL: Smithdown Picture Playhouse	Aug. 10–12
GLASGOW: Bank, Clydebank	Aug. 17–19

A travelogue which attempts to tackle economic conditions.

Face of Britain

DIRECTION: Paul Rotha. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONDON: Strand News, Agar Street	Aug. 10–12
Everyman, Hampstead	Aug. 17–23
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	Aug. 10–12

Hydro-electric power supersedes coal, and the face of Britain can once again be clean.

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns

PRODUCTION: A B. Svensk Filmindustri. ENGLISH PREPARATION: Donald Taylor. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

LONDON: Piccadilly News, Gt. Windmill Street	Aug. 3–9
Studio Two, Oxford Street	Aug. 3–5
LIVERPOOL: Gaumont Palace	Aug. 13–15
Regent, Crosby	Aug. 27–29
Astoria, Walton	Aug. 27–29
New Coliseum	Aug. 31–Sept. 2

A retrospect of European events for the last 40 years, including very early newsreel work.

SHORTS

Great Cargoes

DIRECTION: Paul Rotha. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONDON: Strand News, Agar Street	Aug. 31–Sept. 2
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	Aug. 17–19

March of Time

PRODUCTION: Editors of "Time." DISTRIBUTION: Radio.

Dynamic Journalism.

LONDON: No. 1 Tussauds, Baker Street	Aug. 10–16
Tatler, Charing Cross Road	Aug. 10–16
Monseigneur, Piccadilly	Aug. 31–Sept. 2
No. 2 Plaza, Regent Street	Aug. 24–30
Paramount, Tottenham Court Road	Aug. 24–30
BIRMINGHAM: No. 2 Futurist	Aug. 23–29
BRISTOL: No. 2 King's	Aug. 24–29
Whiteladies	Aug. 24–29
EDINBURGH: No. 1 Synod Hall	Aug. 3–8
GLASGOW: No. 2 Paramount	Aug. 24–29
LEEDS: No. 2 Paramount	Aug. 24–29
LEICESTER: No. 1 Palace	Aug. 24–29
LIVERPOOL: No. 2 Paramount	Aug. 24–29
MANCHESTER: No. 2 Paramount	Aug. 24–29
NEWCASTLE: No. 2 Paramount	Aug. 24–29

Progress

PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONDON: Strand News, Agar Street	Aug. 25–26
Everyman, Hampstead	Aug. 31–Sept. 6
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	Aug. 13–15

The development of communications made in co-operation with the National Physical Laboratory.

Sam and His Musket (Dunning Colour Cartoon)

DRAWN BY: Anson Dyer. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.

LONDON: Monseigneur, Piccadilly	Aug. 6–8

"Secrets of Life" Series

EDITING: Mary Field. TECHNICAL SUPERVISION: Percy Smith. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONDON: Everyman, Hampstead

Wake Up and Feed	Aug. 3–9
Lupins	Aug. 10–16
Living Lies	Aug. 17–23
Home from the South	Aug. 24–30
Hedgerows	Aug. 31–Sept. 6

Imaginative descriptions of natural processes.

Seventh Day

DIRECTION: A. P. Barralet. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

LIVERPOOL: Gaumont Palace	Aug. 3–5
Corona	Aug. 6–8
Magnet	Aug. 6–8
Empress	Aug. 31–Sept. 5

A study of the English Sunday.

Shipyard

DIRECTION: Paul Rotha. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONOON: Everyman, Hampstead	Aug. 3–5

The building and launching of the liner "Orion."

6.30 Collection

DIRECTION: Anstey, Watt. PRODUCTION: John Grierson, G.P.O. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

BRISTOL: Empire	Aug. 24–29

FILM GUIDE (continued)

SHORTS

Song of Ceylon

DIRECTION: Basil Wright. PRODUCTION: John Grierson.
LONDON: Studio 1 — Aug. 9–15
MANCHESTER: Tatler — Aug. 17–22

This was England

DIRECTION: Mary Field. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Strand News, Agar Street — Aug. 3–5
Everyman, Hampstead — Aug. 10–15
BRISTOL: Redcliffe — Aug. 3–5
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur — Aug. 6–8
A Suffolk documentary.

Wild Wings

DISTRIBUTION: Warner Bros.
LONDON: Piccadilly News, Gt. Windmill Street — July 30–Aug. 2
BRISTOL: Embassy — Aug. 24–29
MANCHESTER: Tatler — Aug. 31–Sept. 5
LIVERPOOL: Tatler — Aug. 24–29
Bird life on an American island.

Workers and Jobs

DIRECTION: Arthur Elton. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur — Aug. 24–26
NEWCASTLE: Pavilion, Ferryhill — Aug. 31–Sept. 2
The work of the Labour Exchanges.

ADVERTISING SHORTS

The Birth of the Robot (Coloured puppet film)

DIRECTION: Humphrey Jennings and Len Lye. PRODUCTION: Gasparcolor, for Shell. DISTRIBUTION: Gasparcolor.
MANCHESTER: Castle — Aug. 17–22
BRISTOL: Embassy — Aug. 24–29

Leave it to John (Cartoon and Cinecolour)

DRAWN BY: Ub Iwerks, Celebrity Films. PRODUCTION: Revelation Films for "Boots." DISTRIBUTION: Revelation Films.
LONDON: Regent, Euston Road — Aug. 10–16
BRISTOL: Vandyke — Aug. 3–9
Carlton — Aug. 10–12
LIVERPOOL: Commodore — Aug. 3–9
MANCHESTER: Gaiety — Aug. 3–9
La Scala, Oxford Road — Aug. 10–16
CARDIFF: Queens — Aug. 10–16
BIRMINGHAM: Pavilion, Stichley — Aug. 10–16
Pavilion, Wylde Green — Aug. 10–16
NEWCASTLE: Grainger — Aug. 10 16

TIPS OF THE MONTH

Modern Times

STARRING: Charlie Chaplin, Paulette Goddard. DIRECTION: Chaplin.
PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION: United Artists.
EDINBURGH: Picture House — Aug. 10–15
New Victoria — Aug. 10–15
MANCHESTER: Gaumont Palace — Aug. 24–29

BRITISH FEATURE FILM

The Turn of the Tide

DIRECTION: Norman Walker. STARRING: John Garrick and Joan Maude.
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Euston Cinema — Aug. 23
MANCHESTER: Regent, Rochdale Road — Aug. 27–29
LEICESTER: Picturedrome — Aug. 6–8
BIRMINGHAM: Lyric — Aug. 13–15
BRISTOL: Premier — Aug. 3–5
Olympia — Aug. 6–8
Knowle or Gaiety — Aug. 17–19
Radcliffe — Aug. 20–22
Magnet — Aug. 27–29
LEEDS: Lyceum — Aug. 10–15
Parkfield — Aug. 3–8
Hillcrest — Aug. 13–15
Gainsborough — Aug. 31–Sept. 5
Royal, Meadswood Road — Aug. 10–15
Regent — Aug. 24–29

FOREIGN FILMS

Madchen in Uniform (German)

STARRING: Hertha Thiele and Dorothea Wieck. DIRECTION AND PRODUCTION: Leontine Sagan.
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford Street — Aug. 2–8

The Testament of Dr. Mabuse (German)

DIRECTION: Fritz Lang. PRODUCTION: Nebenzahln. DISTRIBUTION: A. Fried.
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford Street — Aug. 9–15

So Ended a Great Love (German)

STARRING: Paula Wessely, Willy Forst. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford Street — Aug. 16–22

De Kribbebijter (Dutch)

DIRECTION: Hermann Kosterlitz, Ernst Winan. PRODUCTION: Holfi.
LONDON: Academy, Oxford Street — Aug. 17

Sylvia und ihr Chauffeur (Austrian)

DIRECTION: Hubler-Kahla. PRODUCTION: Ciné Central.
LONDON: Academy, Oxford Street — Following "De Kribbebijter"

FILM SOCIETIES' PROGRAMMES

Next month, when the Film Societies are more active, we intend to publish their programmes in this guide. It is not generally known that there are 110 film societies on record. The movement is growing and it is a matter of importance that film societies follow each others' activities.

Wardour Street Needs Facts

By Dr. Hans Hirsch, author of the German Film Year Book (Jahrbuch der Filmindustrie).

Scene: 80–82 Wardour Street, second floor, British Board of Film Censors. The enquiring writer wishes to have figures—statistical material about films. "How many American, French and other long features have been censored in the last three months?" The lady at the counter politely answers: "I am sorry it is impossible to give you these figures; we ourselves have no details. We have only one thing which will help you. Here is our last monthly review about censored films; that is the only way we register."

"Thank you," and later on the poor statistician can study this monthly review. "Name of Film" (in alphabetical order), "Publisher," "Length, in feet" and "Class of certificate": these headings are the basis for composing statistics about foreign films in England. It provides no material for the statistician.

Foreign films? Perhaps there is another important source which could be of assistance. Of course, "The Board of Trade," administrators of the Cinematograph Films Act, may have the figures.

The Board of Trade: a polite official and a polite answer: "I am sorry, we cannot give these figures because we are not interested in such details. In our administration of the Quota Act we only classify *British* and *Foreign*. Here, look, our *Journal*" . . . The appalled statistician flees. . . .

And then later in the Bonded Film Stores, where imported films from abroad are checked, "We do not have these statistics because only a few foreign films pass through our hands. Perhaps you might ask the different ports. But there is no central authority or other institution which gathers and specifies this material, at least not adequately." And the man is right. If all these import figures were gathered, it would be impossible to get the correct numbers, as there is no distinction between the copies of one film and the original of another, so the values must always be incorrect.

Three disappointing visits. A serious thing—typical of conditions in British Film statistics—in contrast to other countries where the film trade and production scale are not comparable with Great Britain, but where statistics are incomparably better compiled.

The figures relating to the turnover of the cinemas and comprehensive data about box office revenues form the basis of all statistical work. It is impossible to get exhaustive material about this financial source of all film production.

"Don't trouble the members!" That is the unwritten but firm principle of the film trade organisations. The C.E.A. and K.R.S. keep inadequate records of these figures and incidentally all exhibitors are not members of the C.E.A. so the statistician is forced to estimate and deduct.

It might be possible to take the entertainments tax income as a basis. But the tax as a starting-point for cinema results is particularly bad. The Government, for instance, does not differentiate between the receipts from the cinema tax and the receipts from concerts. So again one has only total figures and is forced to estimate and deduct.

More favourable are the records of cinema theatres in the United Kingdom. The Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association regularly registers these figures. The organisation receives not only information from its members but also from the others.

"OF URGENT IMPORTANCE"

"I have no hesitation in supporting the suggestion that the organisation of trade statistics in the film business is a matter of great and urgent importance, and that the beneficial results that would in time arise from the material that would thus be made available would compensate many times over for any trouble taken to get them."

SIMON ROWSON

Another trouble which arises, however, is the question of seating capacity. A comprehensive source in this respect is the Kinematograph Year Book and the Cinema Buyers' Guide. But these figures are not very reliable, often being inflated and expressed in round numbers. On the other hand, there should be correct figures for seating capacity. The Board of Trade registers all cinemas in order to control their obligations under the Quota Act. However, the Board is content to record the existence of a cinema, independent of classifications regarding its seats, frequency of performances, etc.

There are other sources which know about seating capacity such as local authorities, empowered to grant licences for cinemas. They are well informed regarding enlargements, new buildings, etc., but there is no central organisation which regularly gathers this valuable material.

Previously, we have only discussed foreign films and the inability to procure sufficient figures about them.

What is the position relating to British films? Let us cast an eye on the statistics of the Board of Trade. This institution only distinguishes "long" and "short" films. The length alone is apparently important. There are no figures about the type of films, and even if the Board had thought of this, the statistics would be insufficient as the Board of Trade does not recognise newsreels, educational, scientific, interest, industrial and advertising films, because these are not "registrable" as British films.

Estimations and deductions all the time. Consider, for instance, the papers of Mr. Rowson (author of "A Statistical Survey of the British Film Industry, 1934"). It is astonishing for a film statistician from abroad to realise the roundabout methods of obtaining even relatively sufficient British film figures. And correct figures are necessary. They are important for government, for parliament and local authorities, for the trade and, last but not least, for scientific work which, on this particular subject, is far better developed abroad than in England.

Regular and correct film statistics are a necessity, in particular for Britain with a film industry which is growing without plan or order or thought of to-morrow. This is clearly revealed by the recent endeavours of the different interested parties to get sufficient material for a real knowledge of the British Quota situation.

What are the conditions of German film statistics in contrast, and what could be done in Britain?

Let us begin with the above-mentioned example of "Foreign" films. In this case the German Censor Office provides exhaustive material through its weekly published lists which give the origin of every censored film. In contrast to the English censor, both production firm and distributor or importer are published. On the basis of this material, the daily trade papers compile regularly published statistics. The daily film newspaper *Lichtbildbuehne* has developed statistics for years and maintains, together with the *Film-Kurier*, a special statistical apparatus. If the British Board of Film Censors published its lists in a more complete way, statistics would be arrived at quite apart from the Board of Trade which should provide important material as well.

Regarding cinema receipts, in Germany the semi-official *Institut fur Konjunkturforschung* undertakes regular monthly statistics in 30 German towns which are taken from many different districts, industrial and rural, and are different in size. So it is possible to obtain representative figures.

The *Institut fur Konjunkturforschung* publishes the figures ("sold tickets," the turnover and figures of the different admission prices). The new statistical department of the *Reichsfilmkammer* plans the compilation of still more comprehensive material.

If it were possible to obtain the figures of individual cinemas' turnover a good insight could be obtained into the development of the film industry.

There is an inclination in this country to underestimate the value of regular and exhaustive film statistics. If they were undertaken with any degree of thoroughness the film trade would find them to be of incalculable value.

Trade's Collective Advertising Scheme

C.E.A. have set up strong committee to investigate proposed £100,000 collective advertising scheme. Simon Rowson suggests that for every two eligible people who visit the cinema regularly, there are three who don't.

U.S.A. exhibitors spend £14,000,000 a year on advertising. C.E.A.'s £100,000 scheme represents ¼ per cent of year's net receipts of the trade, and would be met by addition of 50,000 weekly admissions to British cinemas. Present aggregate advertising allocation of British cinema industry estimated at 3½ per cent to 4 per cent. U.S.A. percentage is nearer ten. On the other hand, American exhibitors earn £14 per week; British a little over £9. Advertising makes the difference, says Rowson.

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world FILM news

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These people have also written for WFN : Bernard Shaw. Stephen King-Hall. Max Schach. Victor Saville. Charles Laughton. Graham Greene. John Grierson. Alistair Cooke. C. A. Lejeune.

SEPTEMBER

SPECIAL FILM SOCIETIES NUMBER

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SIGHT AND SOUND

SUMMER 1936
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world FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

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GREEN PASTURES

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CINEMA.	PLACE.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Forum ...	Southampton.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware.
South Cinema	Hackney.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Ritz	Tunbridge Wells.
Grand ...	Bournemouth.
Regent ...	Norwich.
Hippodrome	Ipswich.
Atherley ...	Southampton.
Broadway ...	Southampton.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Court ...	Wigan.
Cinema ...	Euston.
Picturedrome	Eastbourne.
Gaiety ...	Hastings.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Elite	Nottingham.
Coliseum ...	Derby.
Empire ...	Coventry.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli ...	Portsmouth.
Sphere ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Palace ...	Greenock.
Royal ...	Wolverhampton.
Central ...	Reading.
Kings ...	Leyton.
Empire ...	Walthamstow.
Palace ...	Aldershot.
Theatre de Luxe	Gloucester.
Theatre ...	Cambridge.
Odeon ...	Guildford.
Langham ...	Hull.
Carlton ...	Hull.
Shaftesbury	Leeds.
Pavilion ...	Chelmsford.
Albert ...	Swansea.
Savoy ...	Reading.
Windsor ...	Smethwick.
Savoy ...	Northampton.
Curzon ...	Brighton.
Savoy ...	Nottingham.
Berridge Road	Nottingham.
Kings ...	Exeter.
Empire ...	Exeter.
Headgate ...	Colchester.
Troxy ...	Brighton.
Fosse Cinema	Leicester.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
West End ...	Wolverhampton.
Aspley ...	Nottingham.
Odeon ...	Blackheath, Birmingham.
Allerton ...	Derby.
Cinedrome ...	Plymouth.
Regent ...	Hertford.
Palace ...	Blackpool.
Synod ...	Edinburgh.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Orient ...	Ayr.
Monseigneur	Edinburgh.
Alhambra ...	Dunfermline.
Gaiety ...	Leith.
Cranstone ...	Glasgow.
Palladium ...	Morecambe.
Deansgate ...	Manchester.
Majestic ...	Blackburn.
Rivoli ...	Worthing.
Regal ...	Canterbury.
Queens ...	Stirling.
Tivoli ...	Edinburgh.
Palace ...	Rothesay.
Picture House	Dumbarton.
Commodore	Liverpool.
Cecil ...	Hull.
Rialto ...	York.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.
Picture House	Carlisle.
Royal ...	Liverpool.
Lyceum ...	Govan.
Playhouse ...	Peebles.
Astoria ...	Aberdeen.
Orient ...	Glasgow.
Opera House	Kirkcaldy.
Rio	Rutherglen.
Regal ...	Dumfries.
Majestic ...	Dundee.
Palace ...	Rochdale.
Savoy ...	Blackburn.
Dominion ...	Leeds.
Regal ...	Coatbridge.
Playhouse ...	Peterhead.
La Scala ...	Motherwell.
Plaza... ...	Crewe.
Picture House	St. Andrews.
City	Peterboro'.
Playhouse ...	Inverness.
Playhouse ...	Elgin.
Central ...	Airdrie.
Royalty ...	Douglas, I. of M.
Empire ...	Carnarvon.
Elite	Bradford.
Royal ...	Middlesbrough.
Brittania ...	Dundee.
Pavilion ...	Wick.
Star	Sheffield.
Alex	Paisley.
West End ...	Paisley.
Astoria ...	Belfast.
Capital ...	Belfast.
Broadway ...	Belfast.
Strand ...	Londonderry.
Lyceum ...	Bradford.
Monseigneur	Piccadilly.
Monseigneur	Strand.
Coliseum ...	Aberystwyth.

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A REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN ENGLAND TO-DAY

—in industry, housing and the home. We are moving towards better working conditions, healthier and more comfortable homes. The film shows how applied science is easing life for men and women alike. It takes us from Sheffield to the Cotswolds; from Wythenshawe to the Great West Road; it visits housing estates in town and country; it shows the beginning of a new England.

A FILM ABOUT COOKING

This is a big step towards good nutrition. Two famous chefs show the art of cooking simple things. One prepares a meal such as you yourself could produce at home. Another reveals many of those secret ways of doing ordinary things which are known as chefs' tips and are never found in cookery books. And it's not just straight cookery—a humorist gets into the kitchen with the chef!

GETTING INTO HOT WATER

People don't realise just what trouble and annoyance is caused in every household where there is not enough hot water. Mr. Therm makes his first appearance as a star on the screen, and solves all their difficulties with his new water heaters. This is a sensible film about a real problem, but cheerfulness and music keep breaking in.

★ *The Gas Light and Coke Company will gladly arrange a complimentary showing of the programme to any society in its own area which can provide a suitable and reasonably numerous audience, and a hall. In the rest of England, all those interested, should approach their own Gas Undertaking, through whose courtesy it may be possible to arrange a showing.*

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PAINTED FACES

Harry Tate

By M. WILLSON DISHER

THE MOUSTACHE of Harry Tate points with both ends to some of the differences between films and music-halls. It was the reason of his existence on the halls; we never thought of trying to imagine him without it. Yet when he started life anew in a different entertainment, the moustache was left behind with the red on his chief assistant's nose.

It may look as if variety stars had a lot to unlearn before setting foot in a film studio. What good is variety's box of tricks when the "turn" leaves that street on the backcloth where it is always Sunday afternoon, the river where the fish come up to sneeze when snuff is cast on the waters, and the sea where a puff from the sailor on the shore blows out the lighthouse, in order to walk in and out of real shops, fish in real streams and row on real waves?

Grock made a film. In the settings of real life—or settings so much like real life that the audience was supposed not to know the difference—he could not live and move and have his being as a clown. On the other hand, he could not be his plain everyday self. There was a desperate compromise to present him as a half-wit from the country who becomes a great clown, and we did not believe a word of it. Grock of the halls and the ring is the creature of a Silly Symphony, not of the world that can be photographed.

Take Pogo, the pantomime horse. On the halls or at Drury Lane he is our familiar, our beloved friend, a distinct personality no matter how certain it is that at the curtain two men will disgorge out of his hide. Can you translate that personality with its more-than-human virtue created out of vice, its bumptiousness that wins our lasting affection, into anything at all on the films? When Pogo goes into a picture, he is simply the thing performed by the Griffith Brothers inside. The interest has to be in them. Probably, just before they have to appear before the King, the hind legs will be told by the actress he (in the story) loves, "I'm through."

Grock

All these things considered, the marvel is that the music-hall has provided any flesh and blood material for the films. The plain fact that it has should not abate our wonder. The meaning must be, since the technique is so different, that the spirit that has stood up to the "we are not going to be amused" spirit of variety at its worst, finds the conquest of drama, musical comedy, and cinema fairly easy. But the spirit of Gracie Fields cannot be explained as easily as all that; it cannot be explained at all. With the liveliest recollection of Marie Lloyd and other idols of the old days, I still think Gracie Fields is the most astonishing exponent of the art of twisting audiences round a thumb. You hear them on the halls or at the pictures extolling her voice, her appearance, or her humour. I'm willing to join in any chorus of praise that's going. At the end all that matters has still been left unmentioned. Her quick change into a film actress indicates how much of her we label as "personality" and forget to puzzle over. They took a forthright, honest play (*The Likes of Her*), that reflected the modest, sincere soul of its author, Charles McEvoy. It was not at all pleasant, before the event, to think of it being changed into a singie. Bless you, Gracie Fields could justify deeds of greater violence than that. Any author should be proud to let his work serve her in the manner of Raleigh's cloak.

The successes of "variety artistes" on the films are remembered and the failures forgot. There have been failures. More than once I have given the wrong answer by saying "Grand" when a comedian has asked me what I thought of him in his first picture. There have been struggles between a star who wanted a good variety show in reels and a director who had started with nothing better in his mind than a compromise.

So far it seems that to use a comedian on the films as he exists on the halls is to misuse him. I am quite prepared to find that declaration disproved before it gets into print, for you can't prophesy about these things. At the moment I am still clinging to Harry Tate's moustache and believing that it is the actor underneath the performer who becomes the film star. Of course the answer to this can be forcibly expressed by the mere mention of the name of Charlie Chaplin. His screen self is the apotheosis of music-hall characterisation: that "Charlie" is as true a clown as the first Joey or the first Arlequin, and like them he has made the world accept him as a living reality—instead of as the *representation* of some living reality which can be observed when we walk abroad away from cinema or stage. Yes, it seems simple. The fact has to be faced, however, that it has not been found possible to translate Grock's music-hall self into a screen self. Nor was it possible to keep Buster Keaton's screen self intact when he was persuaded to talk—he became just another actor who was required to act parts. That wearing of masks or using the face as though it was a mask, which is the most natural thing in the world on the halls, does not fit in with our present conception of the purpose of the film. The painted face requires a painted background.

Chaplin

EDITORIAL

world FILM news

SEPTEMBER 1936

The Price of Freedom

OUR ENQUIRIES reveal that there is a movement on foot to prevent all discussion of public affairs on the screens of the country. The newsreels successfully avoid any reference to the issues of the day, and when the "March of Time" deals with the League of Nations in editorial terms not dissimilar from those of the "Spectator," the Censor is quick to emasculate its description. The British studio film is so inhibited by censorship fears that it travels every path but the path of daily reality and romanticises every private life but our own.

The policy of a sterilised screen runs counter to the accepted principles of our English democracy. It has come this week to our ears, for example, that "the less we hear and see of India, the better . . . because there is trouble out there." On this principle, everyone who would use the screen for the service of his generation is denied the primary right of expression. The free citizen is denied information on matters which concern him, and opinion on matters of State is discouraged. The screen is handed over to an abject service of the "status quo."

Everyone of liberal spirit must object to this situation. Cinema is a medium in which the besetting problems of our time may be brought to the imagination. To prevent its healthy use and, at the same time, to encourage the enervating romanticism of the average film, represents a pathetic breach of public responsibility.

We ask all people of liberal and progressive views to take account of this situation and use every opportunity of press and platform to relieve it. Freedom of speech in this great medium is sorely in danger.

Training for Radio

THE ANNOUNCEMENT of a B.B.C. college has promoted varying criticisms. The analogy of the Police College has occurred to many. Left opinion regards it as a school for young Fascists, where B.B.C. tyros will have to dress by the marker and extend the thumb by the seam of their trousers before they are permitted entry to the larger opportunities of Broadcasting House. Right opinion might be expected to welcome such a conception, but no. The B.B.C. college suggests to them that the yellow buttons of its mandarin system will be yellower still.

We believe that these criticisms indicate a real danger which must be guarded against, but that the college idea is none the less a sound one. It is a notorious fact that in the film business there is no machinery for training young men in the viewpoints of the industry and in the special skill which the industry requires. The present catch-as-catch-can method of entry blunts the sensibilities of the beginner before he has half begun and destroys a great deal of good human material. The B.B.C. college has, therefore, a special right to our sympathy. There young B.B.C. men may learn their art and even experiment in their art outside the stress of daily programmes. There, too, they may come, in detachment, to realise the B.B.C.'s problems in education, the social services, entertainment and art.

But the warnings from left and right stand. Discussion at the college must be free, and the system of instruction should keep contact with outside views. The B.B.C. has a juvenile way of getting rid of its irritants, as a recent dismissal from its Talks staff may testify. It will be not the least merit of the College if it teaches the B.B.C. patience in the face of ardour and initiative.

The "People of England"

HOLLYWOOD has evolved a whole class of films which has no parallel in England—films which tell stories, plain or coloured, of ordinary working people. A high proportion of the American product, love stories or crook dramas, comedies, farces or melodramas, are played out with truck drivers and clerks, cops and garage hands, shop girls and paid helps as protagonists. The English film, when it can drag itself away from Plymouth Hoe and Hampton Court and Malplaquet, and when it can forget 1588 *and* 1815, *things to come, and all that, totters only as far as Piccadilly or St. James's, or country houses with forty bedrooms situated in what always looks like Hampshire. Butlers and parlourmaids are necessary evils, but heroes look like thousand a year and heroines like speech day at Roedean. Working people, when presented at all, are presented only as figures of fun by kind permission of Mr. Gordon Harker or Mr. Sydney Howard. Will Fyffe is to be a Lancashire man in "Cotton Queen," perpetuating the film tradition that the North of England is inhabited solely by music-hall comedians.*

Whatever the reason, "we are the people of England, and we have not spoken yet," is as true of the cinema as of Chesterton's view of English history.

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THE FILM COUNCIL

THE ANALYSIS of the Censorship which appeared last month in *World Film News* represents the first work of a new group called FILM COUNCIL. The Film Council informs us that, in spite of its solid name, it has no membership to speak of, no office and no plans for the resurrection of anybody. It is, in fact, a research group which proposes to study various aspects of the film industry and, from time to time, publish its findings. It will keep a specially watchful eye on what it describes as "anti-social and subversive elements," and one research which will have its early attention is the finance behind cinema.

The Council will make its own analysis of the evidence laid before the Moyne Committee, and a survey will be made of the spread of the non-theatrical film in the United States and Great Britain. The political affiliations of the newsreels, the Home Office assault on sub-standard shows and the war of the combines against independent exhibitors and producers are other matters of public importance which are down for enquiry.

By informing the public of what is best and by ruthlessly exposing what is worst, this fact-finding committee must certainly improve the public relations of the film industry. We, in fact, believe it to be, in disguise, the public relations department for which Wardour Street has so long been looking. We therefore welcome it and hope from time to time to have the honour of publishing its discoveries.

The Secretary of the Film Council is Mr. Stuart Legg, who should be addressed c/o *World Film News*, Oxford House, Oxford Street. He asks us to state that membership involves work and is by nomination only. Associate membership is, however, open to writers, lecturers and makers of films, who will have full access to the material turned up by the working committee. A central fund which will permit the continued employment of research men is open to subscriptions, which should be paid to Mr. Legg.

World Film News is pleased to announce that it has itself paid a first subscription of 50 guineas. Here, we say, is a valuable undertaking which it is in the public interest to encourage. There are many things about the film business we should like to know, obscure and, we suspect, well worth bringing into the light of day. We are glad to help any organisation which will undertake the difficult and tedious labour of investigation.

THERE IS RAGE IN RUSSIA

By EISENSTEIN AND PUDOVKIN

S. M. Eisenstein

V. I. Pudovkin

AT the request and on behalf of Comrades Shub and Kaufman, as well as on our own personal behalf, we desire to convey to your magazine our profound indignation occasioned by the outburst of Mr. Meyerowitz respecting the Soviet Cinema. Distortion of facts (such a "trifle," for example, as the statement that the film *We of Kronstadt* was directed by Comrade Vishnevski), distortion of our statements about the Soviet Cinema and Soviet films, and a derisive attitude to the exceedingly complex inner creative processes now taking place in our cinematography—these are Mr. Meyerowitz' return for the friendly reception accorded to him on the basis of letters of introduction from comrades known to us by their frequent visits to the Soviet Union and contributions to magazines of progressive tendency. The crowning and most venomous insinuation is the sentence which he attributes to Comrade Kaufman: "It is quite good that outsiders come from time to time to the U.S.S.R., because they may help to clarify the minds of those who are trying unsuccessfully to impose theories on artists and their productions." A man must not only be obtuse, incapable of understanding the tremendous processes going on in our country, but also completely ignorant of and insensitive to what is indeed the very breath of life and creation to our Soviet artists, in order to be able to put into their mouths such rubbish!

Mr. Meyerowitz typifies that most worthless of Western intellectuals who pours out "crocodile tears" on behalf of the "oppressed Soviet artist."

THE REPLY

Eisenstein and Pudovkin's reply to my article in "W.F.N." does not deal with my criticism. I thank you for letting me see it, but I have nothing to reply.

H. V. MEYEROWITZ

This is a tune familiar to us already for many years past, and one which never fails to secure for a literary effort an attention its own merits might otherwise miss. Our Soviet cinema never has concealed nor does it conceal its mistakes, and its difficulties in creating socialist cinematography have no more been whitewashed than the difficulties that confront our efforts to build socialist society as a whole have in any way been whitewashed. But just as our society is emerging, so our cinematography and our art as a whole are growing and emerging from the depths of the people's creative strength, under the guidance, which alone makes it possible, of the Party and its great chief, Comrade Stalin.

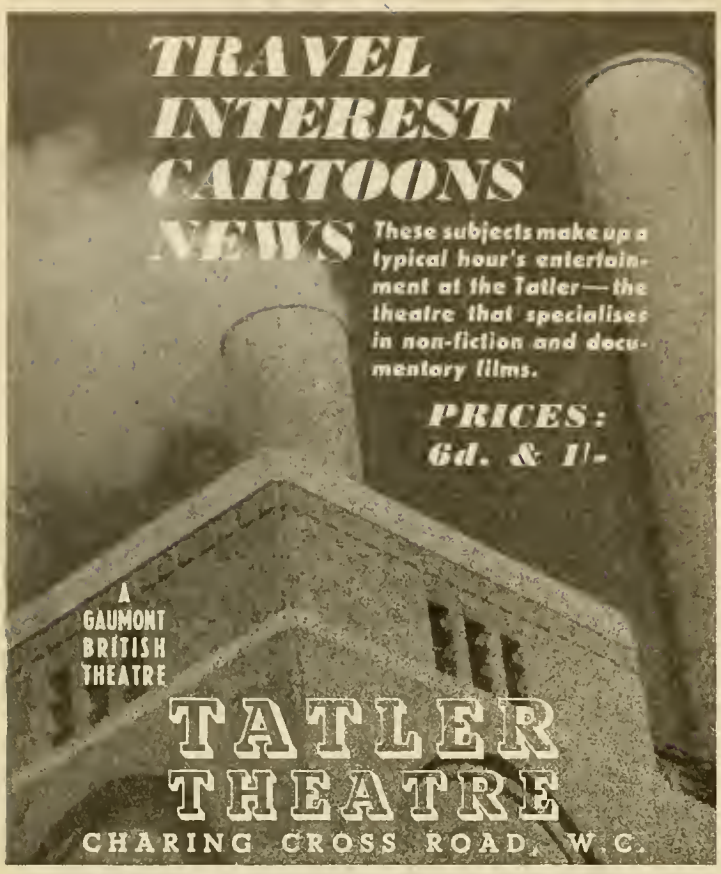
It is this guidance that feeds our creative work and leads us to new victories. The purifying storm of the struggle against both Naturalism and Formalism has been the occasion and is being the occasion of numberless pronouncements by our creative artists. These pronouncements outline perfectly clearly what forms the life, the flame, the inspiration of the revolutionary Soviet artist. And no amount of irresponsible twisting of 'quotations' on the part of Mr. Meyerowitz, copiously hidden beneath 'crocodile tears' on behalf of 'oppressed artists' and objectively serving the nefarious purposes of Fascism, can possibly distort that general line of collective creative work directed towards Socialist Realism by which we live and create.

Meetings and Acquaintances

LUDWIG KOCH, pioneer of cultural gramophone records in Germany, is planning a Sound Institute and offering the idea to the B.B.C. In Germany, Koch made brilliant recordings of birds and animals and the characteristic sounds and dialects of different cities available for study. His plan for a Sound Institute is warmly welcomed by C. K. (Basic) Ogden, Head of the Orthological Institute and by Julian Huxley, Secretary of the Zoological Society. He will have the backing of everyone interested in sound recording for scientific and experimental purpose. The danger is that the idea will be taken up by some such organisation as the Rockefeller Foundation and that the archives of English dialect and folk-lore will pass to America. It is obviously a matter of national importance and B.B.C. prestige that the already valuable gramophone library at Broadcasting House should become also a national repository and study centre. The idea is recommended to Sir Stephen Tallents. This new section of the gramophone department, though not expensive, would maintain valuable contacts for the B.B.C. with educational and scientific workers and with students of nature all over the country.

GABRIEL PASCAL (né Lehöl), Hungarian, about forty-five, once an actor in Vienna, is now promoting in England. Began in films as an exporter from Germany, but later promoted with Richard Oswald and Fritz Lang the sound version of *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* and with Pabst, *The Beggar's Opera*. He was also the promoter of the Lighthouse film, which Czinner and Pola Negri made in England in the last days of the silents, but, when sound came, got out in time. He is now connected with Greenhill, of Olympic Laboratories, and tied up with Paramount for Quota pictures. He has acquired the rights of Shaw's *Pygmalion* and *The Millionairess*, and hopes to do *Pygmalion* by the end of the year. A mixture of cleverness and swashbuckling, with a streak of fancy, Pascal is obviously capable of good things.

The **MARSCHAK BROTHERS** are co-operating in the production of a children's operetta based on the Weather Chapter in Ilin's *Men and Mountains*. The elder Marschak is Russia's No. 1 writer for children and was educated at London University. Marschak the younger is none other than Ilin himself, engineer by trade and author of the dramatised simplifications of Russian economy which began with the classic *Moscow Has a Plan*. The fame of Marschak may be greater in Russia but there is no question as to the influence of Ilin in other countries. *Moscow Has a Plan* has set a standard in modern simplification which has affected technical books in both Britain and the U.S. Arthur Elton's brilliant little analyses of the Fluid Flywheel and Epicyclic Gears, and the new *March of Time* series of Longmans Green—*How Aeroplanes Fly*, *Motor-cars*, etc.—are based directly and deliberately on the Ilin method, which is to reduce the most difficult economic and technical terms to simple visual images. In this sort of work the film mind scores.



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Headache for Historians

"Mary of Scotland" reviewed by Forsyth Hardy

As Scotsmen can be trusted to have very definite views about the presentation of their own country's history, *W.F.N.* has obtained the following review of *Mary of Scotland* from a Scottish film critic, Forsyth Hardy of *The Scotsman*.

After *Pasteur* and, to a lesser extent, *Rhodes, Mary of Scotland* is an unfortunate throwback in screen biography. True, it does not go as far back as *Henry VIII* and give us *The Loves of Mary Stuart;* and a slim extenuating circumstance is the controversy enwrapping the true facts of Mary's life. But enough was known accurately to produce a more authentic picture than this, if that had been the intention. Instead of a studied and sympathetic biography, there is a determined effort to distort the relationship between Mary and Bothwell into a more or less conventional screen romance: seldom did the star system more surely emaciate drama.

Katharine Hepburn as Mary Stuart

Whenever Bothwell appears, marching at the head of the kilted pipers and men of "the Bothwell clan" into the court before Holyrood, it becomes apparent that this is not to be the life of Mary Queen of Scots, but a Hollywoodian love story, an elaborately costumed version of "the boy and the girl and who-gets-who." Throughout the film the relation between the Queen and the Earl of Bothwell is wildly out of historical focus. For example, Mary's resistance at the trial preceding her execution breaks down entirely when she learns that Bothwell is dead, although in fact she had been divorced from and had lost interest in him some years previously. Pre-occupation with this largely fictitious romance makes the final execution scene almost grotesque: as Mary mounts to the scaffold in her ears is "the ghostly skirling of the bag-pipes playing the war-song of the Bothwell clan"!

If the film can be considered as a serious reading of the character of Mary Stuart, then it shows us a fascinating, sexually cold, mainly innocent, proud and deeply religious woman, and ignores all that may be set against this conception. Mary's first action on landing at Leith is to kneel and pray, she pleads with John Knox for tolerance, and, in the execution scene, the emphasis is on her martyrdom in the cause of Catholicism. There is no suggestion of a wanton Queen: Chastelard is not here; Rizzio appears only as a friend who is loyal till death; and her marriage to Darnley is represented as a political move. Mary is shown as determined to secure Stuart succession to the English throne and the conflict between herself and Elizabeth plays a prominent part in the theme.

The character of the film was probably predetermined by the scenario—prepared by Dudley Nichols from the play by Maxwell Anderson—and the opportunities of players and director were limited. Katharine Hepburn does well enough to suggest that with more intelligent material and firmer direction, she might have made something of Mary. Fredric March is not to blame for the boisterously heroic Bothwell and he does make his fictional character live. The most vivid and compelling characterisations are those of Moroni Olsen as John Knox and John Garradine as Rizzio. After *The Informer*, the inconsistencies of John Ford's directions are puzzling. Dramatic unity is lacking, but the construction of separate scenes shows a sense of film craftsmanship, and the camera-work is alert and imaginative.

Mary of Scotland will give the historians headaches, create confusion for the school teachers and make the critical smile. It may even compel Scotland to film its own history.

Frank Capra

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Capra is one of that select band of directors whose names stand for something to the man in the street. His hall-mark is unmistakable. His films are always witty, never harsh—sentimental, but not slushy—funny, but not farcical—and always extremely human. He gets more out of his cast than most, is a master of timing, tends to be wilful in his continuity, and generally behaves like a naughty boy with an expensive toy. He has probably never made an unsuccessful film. One day he may achieve a masterpiece.

Robeson Achieves Dignity

After *Sanders of the River*, Robeson was said to have more than mixed feelings about the role he played in the film. Robeson was not the only one. The triteness of the theme, the uninspired photography, the inferior direction and the obvious fact that the technical advisers were out of touch with the outlook and psychology of the African Negro—all these helped to reduce the status of Robeson in the eyes of intelligent cinemagoers.

Showboat of 1936 did little to alter the opinion. Here Robeson appeared in a musical comedy,

Robeson in "Song of Freedom"

once more as a menial, as a Southern darkie. The dignity which a man of his attainments should have brought to a picture was lacking; he added one more role in the host of films perpetuating the idea that the Negro is a happy, ignorant, loyal servant.

Song of Freedom is different. For the first time we have a story which neither idealises nor condescends. It is the simple story of a negro stevedore, who utilises the money which he earns, by means of singing, to bring "civilisation" to his people in West Africa. How he finds his people, how he proves to them that he is the true descendant of their king are all part of the story.

The description of this discovery of his voice is a happy relief from the American films dealing with similar situations. The delineation of his easy, pleasant unselfconscious relationships with white people is rare in pictures featuring Negroes. Of this picture, Robeson need not be ashamed. Knowing its thematic limitations, it would be cavilling on our part to draw attention to the implications; to the naïveté of the actions of so-called raw African Negroes; to the failure to show them as they really are—simple, dignified and honest. A true picture in all these respects is a Utopian wish, at this stage.

One last word. Never has the full richness and beauty of Robeson's voice been recorded as well as in *Song of Freedom*. To hear Robeson's singing is well worth the price of a ticket. Technically the picture is good. The exteriors shot in Sierra Leone are a welcome relief from the usual synthetic studio sets which we have come to associate with films dealing with the African Negro.

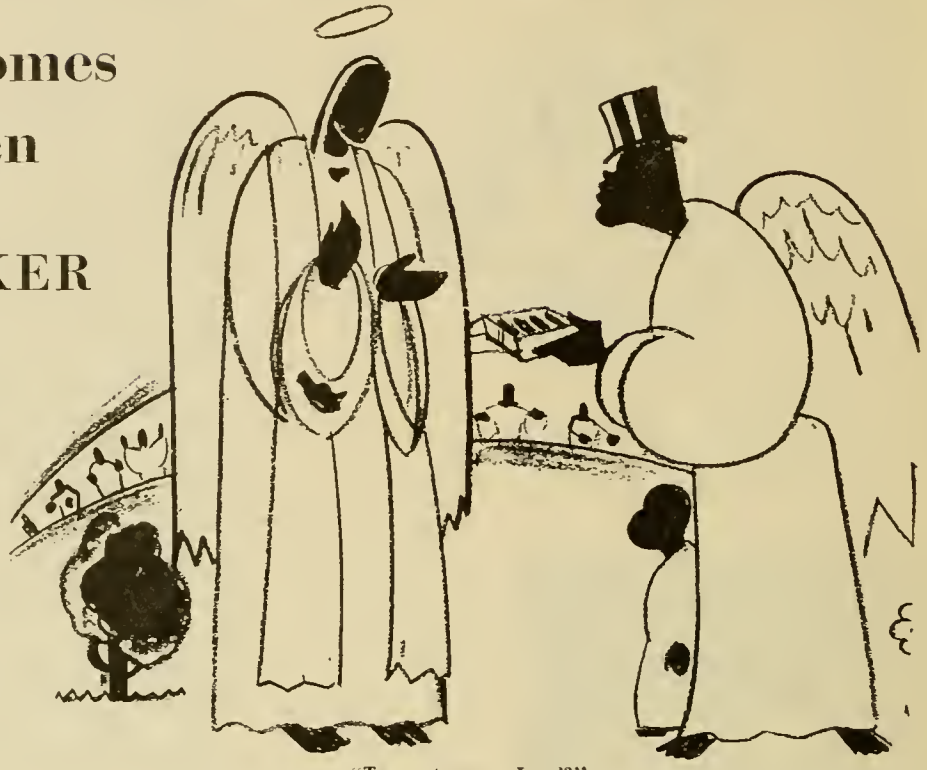
Robin Carruthers and T. A. Glover were responsible for the greater part of the African exteriors, shot on an isolated and semi-savage island on the coast. The film is a Hammer production, released by British Lion and directed by J. Elder Wills. Studio camera work was in the hands of Eric Cross and Harry Rose.

SHERN

CONNELLY'S "GREEN PASTURES"

"De Lawd" comes to the screen

By FELIX BARKER



"Ten cent seegar, Lawd?"

FOR OVER A MONTH the largest cinema in the world has been showing a film which, because of its religious theme, is destined, if shown in this country, to cause a great deal of thought. Alone of any film showing in New York at this season, *The Green Pastures* seems able to draw full houses, so that the Radio City Music Hall is filled to capacity for every performance.

When I left New York a fortnight ago it was nearly impossible to get a seat for this remarkable film. The phenomenon is understandable. Probably never before in the history of the cinema has a film with such a tremendous and difficult theme been attempted. For *The Green Pastures* depicts, without ostentation or self-consciousness, Heaven, the Lord, and various stories of the Old Testament as seen through the eyes of the Southern Negro of the United States.

Producers have always fought shy of religious subjects for censorship reasons. But it was inevitable that such a work as Marc Connelly's now famous play—it has been seen by two million people during its run of five years in over two hundred cities in America—must eventually be given to the even wider audience of the cinema. A few months ago Warner Brothers decided the English censorship might make an exception for so fine a work and arranged for a screen version. They surrendered all the production to the author who, though he knew nothing of film work, could alone insure against the sincerity of the original conception being lost.

"De Lawd"—with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

At Warner House last week there was still hope of the censor's co-operation. The red slip which is the censor's symbol of rejection has not yet been received, so that there is a chance that Lord Tyrrell has appreciated the importance of the film, considers that the sincerity outweighs the religious implication, and will give it a certificate even if it is a precedent in film censorship.

The film is in the form of a "flash back," with a prologue and epilogue set in New Orleans in a Sunday school for Negro children. From this one first senses the naïve quality that is to predominate. Here the preacher is reading from an early chapter in Genesis and is trying to infuse interest into his pupils. From time to time he interposes an explanation or tries to combine the difficult tasks of reducing the stories to terms the children will understand and yet lift them above the usual childish conception. The prologue dissolves into the Negro idea of Heaven and their conception of the action of the stories. Their knowledge is limited and their imagination never transcends the familiar so that what we see is fundamental, immature, and completely without affectation. For this reason the producer has been careful to keep the staging simple and Heaven is not an elaborate set of artificial magnificence.

Always we can feel in the realisation the limited imagination of the Negro struggling (but

never fully succeeding) to understand the stories and to form a mental picture of what he hears. That picture is always in the terms of the familiar. The Lord is a sort of kindly old Negro parson. Heaven, which in parts has the same architecture as the French quarter of New Orleans, is a place of eternal holidays and fish fry picnics. The Lord's "office" has the atmosphere of a Negro lawyer's office with roll top desk and cuspidor. The Garden of Eden is plentifully supplied with Louisiana flowers. Later the iniquitous palace at Babylon has the resemblance of a Negro night club in New Orleans.

The thread of the story concerns the creating of the World and "de Lawd's" dissatisfaction with it when He sees the sinning of the Children of Israel. From the incident of the stolen apple in Eden, the murder of Abel, the irreverence of Seth's great grand-daughter on the Sabbath, gamblers playing crap (a game of dice), and later the degeneration of the chosen people in Captivity, "de Lawd" slowly understands that only by suffering Himself and by giving His own son can the world ever become good.

The cast is, of course, entirely Negro and the stories are acted beautifully and humbly. Few could find fault with the portrayal of the Lord by Rex Ingram, whose every feature is of purity and benign goodness.

In New York I only had a chance of watching the reactions of two audiences to the film but both their receptions were sensitive and showed admirable understanding. There was no self-conscious or embarrassed sniggering, as might have been feared, at such scenes as "de Lawd's" acceptance of a "ten cent seegar" or Gabriel's discussion of the moulting of the angel's wings. I remember only one outburst of laughter—this at a particular line—but it was spontaneous and subdued, such as might greet a joke from the pulpit. The reverential hush that fell over the audience of six thousand when

God: "Didn't de ol' lady light into you?"
Noah (apologetically): "She was kinda restless"

Gabriel, lifting his hand, announces the first appearance of the Lord with "Gangway for de Lawd God Jehovah!" was extraordinary.

Connelly's 'Fable' has a power which is difficult to analyse but one can see above everything sincerity and it is this quality which, if it is banned, will make censorship seem hard and unsympathetic to genuine artistic purpose. The measure of beauty which the film brings to the public consciousness ought certainly to outweigh ordinary rule and precedent.

The Court of old King Pharaoh
Pharaoh (genially): "Dey killed all of 'em, huh?"

Meetings and Acquaintances

JIMMY WONG HOWE. How did he find that name? Well he left China at the age of five for America, and was raised as the Americans say by Irish folk. After graduating from high school he went to California to become an aviator, instead he met a friend who had drifted into the movie business. He was encouraged to get hold of a camera and become a still photographer, and his chance came when he took a picture of Mary Miles Minter and made her look like an angel. That was sixteen years ago. As a result he became her cameraman, and having got his break he shivered and shook in his shoes and was ready to bolt off the set. Since then he has been cameraman on half the big Hollywood pictures, including *Viva Villa*, *Whipsaw* and *The Thin Man*.

Once Jimmy Wong now Howe went home to China and found he couldn't talk to his father because he had forgotten Chinese. The children in the streets ran away from him. "I was a stranger in my own land," said Jimmy, thoughtfully. Nevertheless, some day he hopes to make a real Chinese picture.

Howe finds himself settling down quite comfortably as Pommer's cameraman-in-chief on *Fire over England*. He has a pungent remark to make about colour films. "It is a pity that colour is concentrated in the hands of chemists and business men."

JOHN COLLIER, in from Hollywood, is the author of that brilliant and curious novel *His Monkey Wife*. He is young, bright of eye and in love with success. He reports the completion of a script for Metro-Goldwyn describing the stalwart virtues of our London policemen. Laughton may star. His present work is at Denham with Korda on *Taras Bulba*, which rises like the phœnix from its own ashes at least once a month.

VILHJALMUR STEFANSSON, the celebrated explorer of the Arctic, when introduced to a film director asks cynically, "What proportion do you fake?" In the rarefied setting of a West End Club he demonstrates vigorously the seal hunting methods of the Eskimo and harks back to *Nanook*. As he says, he should know, for he has lived Eskimo for long stretches in the Arctic. How, he says of the Schoedsack-Cooper *Grass*, did the animals manage to go for so long without food? And why do the Aran Islanders wait for stormy weather before they put to sea? Stefansson was born in Manitoba and comes of Icelandic parents. He is meticulous in the details of his description and a harsh critic of others' inaccuracies.

SINCLAIR HILL'S career goes back to the days before the war, when he did odd jobs round Italian studios in Turin. After the war, he joined the old Stoll organisation as a scenarist and later became a director with the same firm. Since then he has worked for Gainsborough and Gaumont-British, and has directed nearly 80 British pictures, silent and talkie. With Harcourt Templeman he has now formed an independent producing company, and they are now working on a British racing film entitled *Take a Chance*.

Boris Karloff
and Screen Wage-Slaves

By A. FORBES

Screen actors and actresses are workers. This fact is hard to realise when hearing of the huge salaries some of the stars carry. But not even the brightest planets dare be unprotected and risk oblivion when their fire dies down. Here is the inside story of the beginning of the Screen Actors' Guild of Hollywood, and the way it has been built up into a powerful Trades Union organisation.

Boris Karloff tells me a thrilling story of the birth and growth of the Screen Actors' Guild. We are sitting in a peaceful English garden on a hot July day, far from the studio and arc lights. The sun warms Mr. Karloff to his theme, though I suspect he really needs no such warming. It is evidently a subject very dear to him. He began:

"I had just returned from England in 1933 and was taking the floor at the Cricket Club dinner-dance when Kenneth Thomson tapped me on the shoulder—

" 'Would you support an autonomous actors' organisation in Hollywood?'

" 'Would I not!'

" 'Then come to my house on Wednesday evening; but don't spill the beans.'

"Wednesday evening saw a few cars parked unobtrusively down the street from Thomson's house. This was a desperate intrigue and we felt we must cover our traces. Eight of us were there—Ralph

Morgan, Frank's brother; the two Gleesons; Charles King; Noel Madison and Thomson and myself. An attorney made the eighth. We decided unanimously to go on with the idea and work out a proper organisation and constitution. . . .

"We met again in a few weeks' time, each bringing someone else who was seriously interested and to be trusted with the secret. Gradually the membership grew to about thirty in a couple of months; but still there were no big stars to give us a show-window and stronger bargaining power. Good old Aubrey Smith was the first actor to join who had much of a reputation then. We were quite small fry at that time.

"Cagney was the first whale to swim along. He nibbled and showed interest, but refused to be netted and would sign no pledges. By this time we'd worked out the details of membership thoroughly. The Guild was to safeguard proper conditions of work; to overlook contracts; give the free-lance actor more security; and to protect both actors and producers from being badly let down. Membership would be for life, and neither Closed nor Open Shop would do; only Guild Shop—open at one end to new members. No organisation is stronger than its weak members . . . we knew that only too well, so tried to devise means whereby members should be bound to the Guild in spite of pressure and temptations. But we were still far too weak to enforce anything of the kind. . . .

"Then N.R.A. started, and, acting in the interests of the producers, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences made demands to Washington which, if agreed to, would reduce the wretched actors to servitude. It had overreached itself, however, and signed its death warrant from our point of view. The actors' branch in indignation held a full meeting and sent a telegram to their representative in Washington urging several important points. The Academy somehow managed to garble this wire, adding four words which completely changed its meaning. Furiously the actors demanded a new instrument with which to protect their interests. This we had all ready in the Guild organisation. All the old directors hurriedly resigned to give a clean deck to the new régime.

"People were interested, but wary. Groucho Marx and Charles Butterworth were our first big catches. But they nearly reduced us to despair at their first meeting—back-chat, wisecracks, faces—you can imagine Groucho! . . . they were irrepressible". . . . He laughed.

"I can imagine Groucho killing anything serious flat on the spot!"

"Yes," said Karloff, swatting a mosquito, "he nearly did! But to our relief the comedians were in earnest about the Guild after all, and joined that evening. Not only that, but they sent telegrams to about 80 important people and called a meeting at Frank Morgan's house in a few days' time. At this meeting they all resigned from the Academy, feeling no longer safe under its auspices.

"Then came our big moment of suspense. A second meeting was called at Frank's house, at which none of us of the old group were to be present. We were to wait half a mile away down the road at Kenneth Thomson's until we were called for to hear if our plans were accepted or not. At last, after two interminable hours, the call came and we trooped up the road wondering what the fate of our child would be.

"Thumbs up. We were welcomed like the visiting firemen! Our schemes were acceptable, and at a big meeting at the El Capitaine Theatre a week later between 5,000 and 6,000 people were enrolled, among them many of the biggest stars. . . .

"Since then we've never looked back. N.R.A. supported us and we soon affiliated with Equity of New York. Talk about needing a shop-window of big names! Listen to our present executive list:—President, Robert Montgomery; 1st Vice-president, James Cagney; 2nd Vice-president, Claudette Colbert; 3rd Vice-president, Chester Morris; Secretary, Kenneth Thomson; Assistant Secretary, Boris Karloff; Treasurer, Noel Madison; . . . and among the Directors are Joan Crawford, Frank Morgan, Pat O'Brien, Ed. G. Robinson and Walter Connolly."

LOCO-MOVIES

Thirty-five thousand patrons in one year is the L.N.E.R.'s record for cinema shows in trains. Their theatre is a converted luggage van and it runs on the King's Cross to Edinburgh route. The venture has proved so popular that for the past few months a second cinema van has been operating on the Leeds to Edinburgh train. The original "van" contains 44 seats and there are six performances daily. The price for admission is one shilling and the number of patrons per day is about one hundred.

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JUDY—with a Punch

By DENIS MYERS

DO YOU like Silly Symphonies? Here's one—starring red-headed Judy Kelly—impressionable interviewer—comedy teams of directors, British and French—clatter of teacups—echoes of Paris melodies—a near-murder—and a prediction.

Silly Symphony—maybe, but there's often a revealing truth hidden in the antics of the screen cartoonist's characters.

"I'm sorry," said the British casting director, "you're too much the charming young girl. I want a murderess."

Red-haired Judy Kelly's eyes flashed.

"Wait," she said, "I have committed a murder. I killed my husband. I took the knife like this and . . ." (with deadly intensity) ". . . I killed him . . . like this."

She nearly killed the casting director, too, but she got the job.

Judy told me this story, re-enacting for a moment the wronged wife, in the sitting-room of her sixth-floor flat.

Only a "baby" star as yet, and apt to be used more decoratively than dramatically, Judy is too much an actress to be able to talk of anything without giving you the actual atmosphere of it.

When she spoke of her homeland there was Australian arrogance in her tones, when she told me of her work in France the ghost of a Parisian accent rippled over the silken voice, when she chatted about British filmland she was just a typical English girl.

But Judy doesn't want to be a "typical English girl" any more, nor a dyed-in-the-wool vamp.

She wants, like all ambitious young actresses, a real part. And when she gets it, Britain is going to wonder why she wasn't given it before.

Because Judy is, I think, going to startle filmland one of these days.

She has appeal rather than beauty, personality rather than glamour, and a complete and refreshing lack of affectation.

I'm afraid, too, she has brains.

And Judy knows her job. She's had her training in the hard school of the touring theatre (she's played in the West End, too), and when, "spotted" as a potential winner after a small part in the *Henry VIII* picture, she was offered a leading but futile part, Judy steeled her heart and refused.

She went on playing "bits and pieces" that were more interesting, and built up her experience for the leads she now expects—and gets.

But she's not satisfied artistically.

"British films," she said, "seem to have stock characters and dialogue that might be taken from the three-decker novels of Victorian days.

"A villainess has got to look like a villainess, a poet's got to look like what a poet is supposed to look like, not like a real poet, whom you'd probably take for a stockbroker.

"If you want to get a part here, you've got to dress for it when you go for the job. The second time I went to see that director who wanted a murderess, I got myself up like the bold bad adventuress of a penny dreadful.

"Furs and a cocotte make-up—and I swaggered in and sat down and crossed my legs and looked at him under my lids like this——"

An impressionable interviewer blushed, flicked his eyes away from the perfect ankle that swung from the armchair in the Bayswater flat—away to the spiky eyelashes of a platinum sister—back to an impish Judy.

"——and he said 'Good Lord! Why didn't you come and see me like that the first time?'

"I nearly told him he ought to have been a wardrobe mistress and not a casting director.

"You see, they cast to type, and so they often fail," she went on.

"And the Continental directors, for example, don't. So they score, especially in the small parts. Yet they've not nearly as many film artists in France as we have.

"As a matter of fact there's a great shortage of them, and anyone who can speak French with even the remotest kind of Gallic accent can get a job, if he or she is a good performer.

"Because they go all out for acting and not type.

"They wouldn't book a man to play a greengrocer because he looked like one. They'd find an actor who could create a perfectly played little cameo."

I asked Judy if she enjoyed playing in France, where she recently did a picture with Harry Baur.

She laughed. "It was great fun," she said, "and, oh, very French.

"In England, when you arrive at the studio in the morning probably at the crack of dawn, everyone's liable to be bad-tempered, nothing goes right.

"In France, no one thinks of starting work till there's been a general handshaking all round, from the directors down to the dressers, general inquiries as to how Mademoiselle is, how she enjoyed herself yesterday, and so on.

"And if Mademoiselle doesn't feel like working—if Monsieur has the bad headache—Zut! One cannot work if one is not in the mood, and work stops.

"And that goes," laughed Judy. "No good changing your mind a few minutes later and saying you feel like working. They just won't let you.

"And in the evenings when you do finish, there's more general handshaking, exchange of compliments, earnest wishes that you will have a 'bon appétit' at dinner, agonised entreaties that Mademoiselle will have a gay evening in the city of play.

"Though I don't really like Paris," she confessed. "It's too artificial. They seem to make such a serious business of gaiety."

Pasteur—Mountebank and Racketeer

By L. J. DOLE

Not one film critic has described *Pasteur* as possibly the last attempt to "cash in" on the crumbling reputation of the most dangerous mountebank in history. In fact one would imagine that there were no two opinions about the parasite-germ theory upon which Pasteurism was founded!—or else it is tacitly assumed that all opposition is at an end. The fact is merely that the opposition is not—like Pasteurism—an immensely profitable and widespread racket.

There is an anti-Pasteur gang about and L. J. Dole is one of its more violent exponents. The readers of "W.F.N." have not heard the other side. "W.F.N." publishes it happily.

Let us consider facts—real authentic documents, not imaginary ones, but the records of the Académie des Sciences, etc., dated and signed. They will do nothing to bolster up Pasteur's reputation as a bacteriologist or as a discoverer of truth; and the germ theory of disease is crumbling to bits even in the heart of the Pasteur Institute itself.

Pasteur's true history is one of personal ambition and successful plagiarism, bluff, cunning and cruelty: his insolence to experienced doctors and his disgraceful treatment of real men of science, like Professor Antoine Béchamp, who taught him with great difficulty almost all the truths he ever swallowed—which then were appropriated as his own discoveries—would make unpleasant reading to his modern backers. Hence the conspiracy of silence—in which the Press is "invited" to join. But facts cannot be buried for ever: widespread error costs too much.

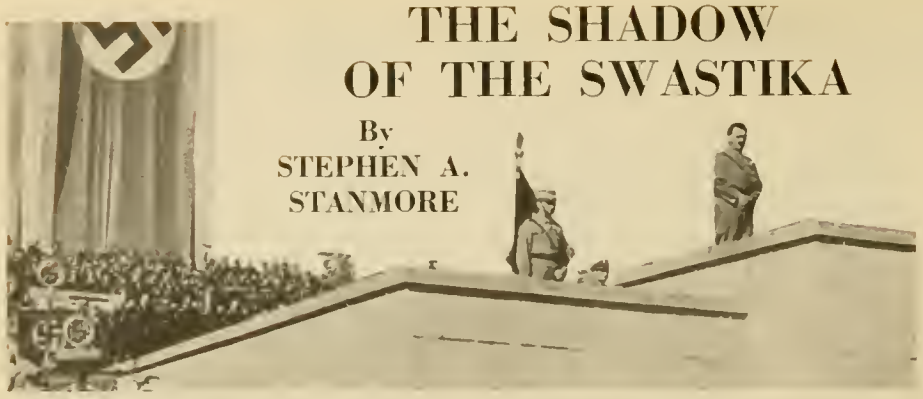
Pasteur could fill plenty of space in a Dictionary of Mountebanks, but the usual text-book way of dealing with him is to print a photograph of him and describe him as one of the founders of modern bacteriology—after which a multitude of facts are blurted out which flatly contradict everything he ever thought or said! So simple!—just like Jenner's history—and it saves all the trouble of changing the name of the Pasteur Institutes.

The truth about "germs"—a silly word—has been so "twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools" that it is taking a long time to straighten it out again; but, if the film producers want a real documentary film about the matter, they must go to the original sources and not to the advertising department of the manufacturing chemists!

In "Doctor Socrates" Paul Muni made a perfectly legitimate use of the fairy-story of Louis Pasteur—to dope a lot of crooks. It is a pity he was induced to spoil this by making the other film, though I understand that he is already sorry he did. It will certainly kill scores of children and other innocents. It may already be doing so. In the recent rabies panics in Philadelphia, several Pasteurised patients have died—and apparently no others! Quite like the good old days when Pasteur "saved 1,500 lives per annum" by increasing the rabies fatalities by 50 per cent in France for thirty years!

THE SHADOW OF THE SWASTIKA

By STEPHEN A. STANMORE



ON MARCH 13TH, 1933, the Hitler Government constituted a Ministry for Enlightenment and Propaganda under the direction of Herr Goebbels. The official commentary stated that the Reich will take in hand the mental leadership of the nation. The Ministry is to embrace and supervise all the tasks and means of spiritual influence: the entire sphere of art, technical mediums of influence: press, radio, film. For the National-Socialist State culture is the concern of the nation, not of the individual. Enlightenment and propaganda have to direct the will-power and conviction of the people to serve the aims of policy.

This programme has been accomplished by a strictly corporative organisation of press, radio, theatre, film, music, arts. Their activities are closely directed and supervised. For the film the following measures have been taken: the constitution of the Reichsfilmkammer (Reichs Film Board); a system of universal censorship; the appointment of a Reichfilmsdramaturg; the foundation of the Filmkreditbank.

The Reichsfilmkammer is the central body of the German cinema. All those concerned in the production, sale, exhibition of films must belong to it: producers, directors, actors, scriptwriters, musicians, cutters—down to the supers—all technical engineers, renters, cinema owners, projectionists; only members are entitled to be occupied in the production and the sale of films. The exhibition of a film is inadmissible if the producer cannot prove membership of all who take part in the production. The organisation has been the filter to exclude all undesirable elements. Jews, non-Aryans, political dissenters are not admitted to membership. The Reichsfilmkammer is supervised by the Ministry: its president is not elected by the members but appointed by the Minister himself, two representatives of the Government being on its Board of Directors.

The Reichsfilmkammer is empowered obligatorily to regulate the operation, opening, closing of enterprises in the film trade, to give binding directions for the wording and execution of contracts, to rule on every important economic question. Every contravention of the regulations set up by the Reichsfilmkammer may be punished by cancelment of membership, preventing all further activity of the trespasser. So the organisation is an effective instrument to supervise, rule on and control everything relating to the sphere of the film.

Supervision of the production begins with the first conception of a film. The producers are obliged to inform the Reichsfilmdramaturg about the subjects they intend to film. The post of Reichsfilmdramaturg, an official of the Ministry, has been instituted "to prevent productions which disagree with the tendencies of the epoch, to influence cast, form and execution of a picture" (official statement). He can reject a subject; he can ask for the script and propose modifications. His suggestions for alterations of a script are obligatory; he is authorised to intervene at any stage of the production. In 1934 two films of UFA were prohibited because the directions of the Reichsfilmdramaturg had not been followed. Contraventions of his request may result in exclusion from the Reichsfilmkammer. Since then production has become so well "synchronised" that the collaboration of the Reichsfilmdramaturg is willingly accepted. The Reichsfilmdramaturg informs the Board of Censors about the scripts he has approved, so that it is almost a guarantee that the film will also receive the censor's approval.

GERMAN FILM PRODUCTION

1932	127	dramatic	pictures
1933	121	,,	,,
1934	122	,,	,,
1935	94	,,	,,

* * *

In 1934 the export figure was 35 per cent lower than in 1932. The trade reports of UFA and Tobis state for 1935 a further reduction. The national socialist revolution did not give a new impulse to production: no new artistic elan, no daring experiment, no fanatic working as in the first stages of the Russian Film. No new talent has been discovered to take the place of the expelled directors and actors. The successful pictures are done by the same people who did them before.

It is significant that the State-Film-Prize has been awarded this year to a picture re-creating the atmosphere of 1900, based on a naturalistic play of that epoch, directed by the 60-years-old Carl Froelich, with Jannings in the leading part.

The President of the Filmprufstelle stated, that the German Film is still bloodless and humourless, that it is out of touch with reality and has no originality.

* * *

It seems that the gigantic organisation of the totalitarian state cannot replace the wit of one Mr. Lubitsch.

Before a picture is admitted to public performance it has to pass an elaborate system of censorship. A complete list of all persons cooperating in its production must first of all be submitted to the Kontingentstelle where, in the case of a German film, an examination is made as to whether all the collaborators are members of the Reichsfilmkammer. Applications for the permission of exceptions have to be made before the film is begun. The slightest offence in this respect affects the non-admission of the film. The regulations for foreign films prescribe that their admission is refused "if the producers have made any picture discreditable to German prestige abroad, or if the admittance of German pictures meets with any difficulty in the country of origin." The same racial attitude applies to cast and collaborators as with German films—except that application is not so consistent.

Films in which Jewish actors or directors collaborate, who formerly worked in Germany, are never admitted. The collaboration of Bergner, Mosheim, Kortner, or Tauber, the direction of Lubitsch, Lang, Pabst, are absolute reasons for prohibition.

The Paramount film *Desire* could only be smuggled in because the name of Lubitsch was not mentioned, and Frederick Hollander was not recognised as the former Berlin musician, Friedrich Hollander.

The demands of the Kontingentstelle have become much stricter of late. Two years ago, for example, *La Maternelle* (directed by Jean Benoit-Lévy), *Les Nuits Moscovites* (with Harry Baur) were admitted; the latter film was prohibited after its great success in Berlin. In spite of this French films enjoy a privileged position, evidently not to endanger the export of French versions of the UFA productions. Thus the recent Harry Baur film *Les Yeux Noires* was licensed; the important ones, *Les Misérables*, *Crime et Chatiment* rejected. Of ten Metropolitan films presented for admission three were refused by the Kontingentstelle (*The Great Ziegfeld*, *Rose Marie*, *Tale of Two Cities*). Four others were declined by the censor. The reason for this more strictly applied censorship lies in the trade relations with the U.S.A., where special measures have been taken against German dumping. This does not mean any loss for the American companies as the receipts cannot be transferred to foreign countries on account of the German exchange regulations. There is no appeal against the decisions of the Kontingentstelle.

After the Kontingentstelle has licensed the cast the picture itself is examined by the Board of Censors. (Filmprüfstelle.) All the pictures which had been admitted before January 30th, 1933, were censored anew according to the new regulations. 2,274 old pictures were examined, 738 of them rejected. The President and the members of the Board are appointed by the Minister for Enlightenment and Propaganda. The examination chambers are composed of the President and four Assessors, only one belonging to the trade; one must be a writer, one an artist. The assessors have only a deliberate vote. The President himself decides. Against a decision the producer can appeal to the Oberprüfstelle. If the Minister disapproves of the admittance of a picture, he can demand a new examination by the Oberprüfstelle.

Even this regulation did not seem efficient enough for the Government, so that the Minister was granted the extraordinary and immediate right, without any formal proceedings, to prohibit

pictures undesirable for reasons of internal or foreign policy.

The "Lichtspielgesetz" (law governing cinemas) of the Weimar Republic contained only one reason for prohibiting pictures: Danger to public security and order. It was expressly stated that a picture could not be prohibited for its political, religious, ethical, or Weltanschauungs tendencies. Some Russian pictures were prohibited in spite of this, "endangering public security"; the Remarque picture *All Quiet on the Western Front* was suppressed by a socialist minister, after Herr Goebbels—at that time not yet Minister—had censored it as being against the National-Socialist feelings, and had organised riots of protests in the streets and in the cinema, by letting loose blind worms and white mice in the pit, whereupon the film was forbidden as endangering public order.

In general the censorship of the Weimar Republic was one of the most liberal in Europe. The accession of the Hitler Government caused a complete change. The totalitarian state pretends not only to examine the pictures for their political and moral tendencies but also for their artistic value. The following paragraph contains the whole scale of reasons for non-admittance:

"The admission is denied if the examination shows that the exhibition of a film is liable to endanger vital interests of the state or public order or security, to offend against National-Socialist, religious, moral or artistic feelings, to have a brutalising or demoralising effect, to endanger German prestige or Germany's relations to foreign states."

Here are some examples of practical interpretation:

Vital interests of the state are endangered by a picture liable to weaken the desire to defend one's country by arms..

The public order is endangered by stressing contrasts of the classes which have been abolished in the third realm.

No German synchronisation of *Ruggles of Red Gap* was admitted on account of the Lincoln speech on democracy; so that Mr. Laughton quoted it only for the happy few.

National-Socialist feeling is injured by the portrayal of love affairs between Aryans and non-Aryans; *The Last of the Pagans* was prohibited for this reason because it glorifies coloured people as superior to the white race.

Robin Hood of Eldorado was qualified as brutalising in effect; *Bohemian Girl* as injuring artistic feelings. The definition of this feature naturally worries the censors, they paraphrase it as stupid and silly clownery, stupefying and dull, corrupting taste.

Aesthetic examination has still another positive and important side. The Filmprüfstelle has to state if a picture may obtain one of the following qualifications: "of state-political value, of artistic value, of educational value."—The award of one of these marks has a very practical effect; pictures thus distinguished are given tax-privileges. A picture of state-political and of artistic value is even exempt from all taxation. The proprietors of cinemas are induced by this advantage to show them. The marks are not only granted to German but also to foreign pictures. *Henry VIII, The Scarlet Pimpernel, David Copperfield, Anna Karenina* obtained the mark of artistic value.

The certificate of educational value is granted to documentaries and educational films. State-political value has been attributed to very different pictures of some propagandist significance: to every documentary showing the activities of the Government, newsreels, to playfilms with direct or indirect National-Socialist, general "heroic," or militarist tendencies; among them a military comedy (*Soldaten—Kameraden*); a reportage of Nazi Party meetings; *The Wonder of Flying*; the Schmeling boxing-match (shown under the title *Schmeling's Victory, a German Victory*), and, as the only foreign picture, the Swedish farce, *Petterson and Bendel*, which was made the starting-point for renewed Jew-baiting.

"Triumph of The Will"

Like Press and Radio, the Cinema is used for immediate governmental propaganda. The tenor and contents of the weekly news are ordained by the Ministry; it is fixed that certain events have to be shown, others—foreign for instance—have to be omitted. But beyond it speeches of the Führer or members of the Government, "State Acts," big Party events are taken on order of the Ministry. These pictures have to be projected by the owners of the cinemas. Contraventions are punishable by exclusion from the Reichsfilmkammer, which means the end of all professional activity. A performance often begins with the reproduction of important parts of speeches lasting about twenty minutes. The most striking example of propaganda was the preparation of Hitler's peace vote after the reoccupation of the Rhineland. During a fortnight long extracts of the Führer's speeches, skilfully illustrated by atmospheric shots of the meetings, were projected in every German cinema the day after he had delivered them. The evening before election day the last appeal of the Führer in its full extent was broadcast in all German theatres and cinemas, so that the beginning of the performance was postponed for more than an hour. The lyrical reporting of the Party Rally of 1934 was the longest of the propaganda documentaries. It was shown as a big feature throughout Germany under the title *Triumph of The Will*.

The number of playfilms expressing National-Socialist ideas is very small. In 1933 a life of the Nazi hero, Horst Wessel, was filmed. But the Nazi authorities were so dissatisfied with it that it was admitted only under the title *Horst Westmar*. *Friesennot* shows a colony of German peasants in Russia struggling against their Bolshevist suppressors. A film dealing with the Labour Service. That is an almost complete list. Although these pictures obtained the certificate of "exceptional political and artistic value", excellent reviews and the fullest support of the Party, they were not successful, so that Herr Goebbels recently prohibited the production of dramatic pictures by the Nazi Party. For the purpose of direct propaganda a special society with its own studios has been created.

ECONOMICAL MEASURES. The expulsion of the Jews from the film business stopped production for a moment. The loss of so many well-known producers, actors, directors, induced the banks to withdraw their credit. To prevent a complete breakdown the Government organised a special "Filmkreditbank." As the bank is controlled by the Ministry for Propaganda it has become an additional instrument to supervise production. The granting of credits does not only depend on purely capitalist considerations. Pictures of political propaganda-value are promoted. The complete script which has to be submitted must have the agreement of the Reichsfilmdramaturg. The maximum credit amounts to 70 per cent of the cost of production. The producer must provide 30 per cent and a surplus reserve of 15 per cent. In 1935 69·5 per cent of German production was financed by the Filmkreditbank.

The Reichsfilmkammer has taken several decisive steps for the reorganisation of the film-business. (1) To reduce the competition between the cinemas, minimum-prices have been fixed. (2) The scope and arrangement of the performances are strictly prescribed. The length of the whole programme is restricted to 3,500 m. It must contain a newsreel; then an educational or documentary picture of at least 250 m., which has got a mark from the Filmprüfstelle. It may contain a small picture of at most 900 m. (cartoon, oddity, etc.). Programmes with two big features are prohibited. (3) The opening of new theatres is forbidden.

The last move of the Reichsfilmkammer will extend production, which generally declines from January to April, over the whole year. By this measure should be assured the opportunity of slower and calmer working and a better utilisation of staff and material. As a compensation for the delayed exploitation of pictures done in the dead season great facilities are given by the Reichsfilmkammer, the studios, and the printing laboratories.

Tradition retards Indian Film Progress

By WINIFRED HOLMES

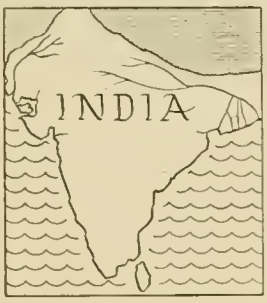
"Films could unify and educate backward peasant India as nothing else. Perhaps the new Viceroy will start a campaign. . . ."

WHEN AMERICAN FILMS poured into the country at the beginning of the twentieth century educated drama-conscious India lapped them up. Though reflecting a foreign ideology, they had action, thrills, romance, and helped to teach the new *lingua franca*—English. So keen did the younger generation of city-dwellers become, that greybeards wagged in dismay and mumbled of denationalisation, corruption of morals, break-up of custom. However, the proportion of Indians who could afford the cinema was so small that the Government did not smell danger till 1918, when it passed the Indian Cinematograph Act, setting up the system of governmental censorship which operates to-day.

Only a limited public could read captions, so stunt and excitement films were most popular. Fairbanks, Lloyd and Chaplin drew biggest houses, *The Thief of Baghdad* with its oriental setting capping the poll. Eighty per cent imported films were American, the British industry being in the perambulator stage. When it grew up the market shrunk. Language difficulties of talkies, their slow action, the growth of an indigenous industry based on native tradition, using only native talent, emptied Western-film-showing theatres of almost all but English patrons.

The first Indian film was made by Mr. Phalke, of Bombay, who later founded the Hindustan Film Co., Nasik, and produced several successful silent films. Other companies sprang up in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lahore, etc., all with small private capital, little technical knowledge, no training and scanty equipment. Their pictures were crude in technique compared with Hollywood products, but it was a feat to have made them at all, and they won instant popularity with Indian audiences. Here was no alien mode of life but stories from their own mythology, religions and history, stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Traditional musical accompaniment was used, songs in the ancient forms of *Rag* and *Ragini*: Hindu dances; dramatic conventions such as death not being performed on the stage, no love-making between man and wife, no stories of married women and lovers, no drinking or gambling, no nakedness. The acting was after ancient traditions of Sanskrit drama and mediæval popular morality plays, combined with the newer imported influence of Shakespeare.

In 1926 there were 21 producing companies in India—now there are hundreds. None are very big, none have much capital, all produce films for a certain religious or racial group only, or for one district, and in one of the chief vernaculars—Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Gujerati, Tamil or Telegu. English is the only common language, spoken by a mere 6 of the sub-continent's 360 millions. These companies are as much handicapped by differences of custom and creed as of language. For instance, there is no dramatic tradition among Mohammedans, their religion forbidding the portrayal of Islam's holy characters. Moslems are now producing films especially for their own people.



INDIAN FILM FACTS

In 1926, 21 producing companies; 1936, hundreds

Less than 2 per cent of population speak English

Three-quarters of population too poor to see films

650 cinemas for 360 million people

High tariff on imported films

Moslems make films for their own people

موجودہ ہندوستانی فلم سازوں کا یہ رویہ
ہے کہ وہ غربی فلموں کی اندھا دھند کاپی کر
رہے ہیں۔ چنانچہ شکسپیرین طرز ایکٹ
شہوت و فلم سٹار پرستی اور قزاقی کے
ڈرامے عموماً اُن کے راہنما ہیں۔ گرچہ یہ غربی
فحشات ہندوستانیوں کو غیر ہیں لیکن
پبلک کو رواں کے کوئی چارہ نہیں
شیخ احمد

"It is characteristic of present Indian producers to mimic western films without any differentiation between the good and bad. The overacting of old Shakespearian players, sex appeal, film star worship, and gangsters seem to be their ideal source of inspiration. None of these are the characteristic of India to-day and yet these alien monstrosities are forced upon the Indian film audience."

S. AHMED

India is not a promising market for the industry's development on a big scale. £7 per capita is the average income to Great Britain's £60. More than three-quarters of the entire population is agrarian—"chou-anna-wallahs"—too poor to afford a few pies (less than farthings) for a seat. Superstitious, illiterate, conservative, films will have to be simple in the extreme to appeal to them.

In 1927 British India and Burma, population 240 millions, had 300 permanent cinemas to Great Britain's 3,700 for a population of 47 millions, and America's 20,500 for a population of 120 millions. To-day, 1936, the whole of India, population 360 millions, has only 650 cinemas, of which most are in big cities—36 in Bombay, 20 in Lahore. There are a few travelling and seasonal cinemas for country districts, but cinema-going is practically confined to educated town-dwellers.

Rebirth of nationalism and progressive indianisation are also weakening the influence of Western films. The Motion Picture Society of India agitated till Government recently reduced the duty on raw films and studio equipment. There is a quota system in operation, and a high tariff on imported films—an 8,000-foot feature pays nearly £100 duty, "a matter of serious consideration," says *Kiné Year Book* 1935. Indian films are allowed to fulfil quota requirements in this country, but specimens shown here have been too crude in technique and alien in outlook to appeal to Wardour Street.

But they appeal to Indians. *Amritmanthan* ran for a year in Bombay. *Devdas*, produced in Calcutta's "Tollywood," swung popular taste away from sentiment and melodrama to subtle psychological studies. *Dharmatma*, the life of the Brahmin saint, Eknath, who tried to break down barriers of untouchability, and *Dr. Madhurika*, domestic difficulties of an Indian woman doctor married to a lawyer, with a home to run and a job, are not only popular but have social significance.

India most dislikes films made by foreigners with incorrect or unflattering Indian background. *India Speaks*, a Paramount "Mother India" effort, and *Bengali* of R.K.O., were banned in the entire British Empire at request of the Motion Picture Society. Films made with western capital but Indian experts are more acceptable. *Shiraz*, *The Throw of Dice*, *Karma*, the Tagore films, are such composite efforts. India is jealous of her prestige and has no redress for misrepresentation as her own films are not shown in the West.

Government recognises the importance of films for education, especially among an illiterate population. It is hampered as yet by lack of funds. The Agricultural Department makes shorts of rural reform—modern methods of cultivation, improved seed and implements, pests and their cure, change of inheritance laws, etc. A travelling van takes these films round to fairs and ploughing matches. Keen interest is shown everywhere. Health and hygiene films are made by the Red Cross and the Hygiene Institute—a film on prevention of accidents in machinery proving particularly valuable. "Safety First" films are made by the Railways Department. The Indian Tea Association uses Assam-made films to recruit coolie labour from the plains. Films could unify and educate backward peasant India as nothing else. Perhaps the new Viceroy will start a thorough campaign. . . .

In the meantime the seventy-year-old Rajah of Aundh has realised the educational possibilities in films. He has recently produced a film called *Surya Namakar*, *Salute to the Sun*, in which he and members of his family demonstrate remarkable exercises and methods of keeping strong and young, which were brought to India from Persia 5,000 years ago by Sri Krishna. They are performed as a tribute to the sun, and consist chiefly in rhythmic breathing exercises with a temple bell marking the rhythm. The Rajah himself is a perfect advertisement for the system, as he is straight and lithe as a youth. This film has been made for the express purpose of teaching his subjects. Anyone can do the exercises, he says, in however small and poor a room, whereas football and cricket need other people's co-operation and large open spaces. Hindi is the vernacular used, but an English version is at present being prepared over here.

The next article of this series will deal with the Mexican film industry.

CEDRIC BELFRAGE
REPORTS ON
Russia's "Gollywood"

In view of W.F.N.'s recent information about films in the U.S.S.R., Cedric Belfrage was contacted in Moscow and asked to give his opinions. Belfrage had not had the opportunity of reading "Russia Goes Hollywood" by H. V. Meyerowitz in our July issue. His report reveals a new aspect of the transition period.

THE NEWS THAT *Modern Times* was to be shown "immediately" in Moscow sent us hurrying on from Leningrad with a mere glance at the ballet. We were green in Russia and did not know that one word served for "immediately" and "presently," covering anything from an hour to a year hence. After a month there is still no sign of Chaplin on the cinema playbills (and there is also *City Lights*, which was bought simultaneously, to be shown). But the reception given *Modern Times* by a professional audience at the Domkino club and by the press, leaves no doubt about the riotous success awaiting it throughout the U.S.S.R. The film might have been cut to measure to current Soviet mentality, eager for gaiety but always diligently occupying itself with the domestic and personal problems of the individual in society.

The popularity of this undeniably defeatist-flavoured film, taken together with such manifestations as the introduction of golf and the increased demand for lipstick by Soviet womanhood, will help sceptics to convince themselves that Russia is going bourgeois and has forgotten the Revolution. It will be another blow for those members of our higher montage circles who have been finding it increasingly difficult to point with pride in the direction of Moscow. Proof will no longer be needed of the rumour that Soviet audiences will now accept only American films or home-made copies of them.

How much truth is there in this gloomy legend? With regard, first, to "Gollywood"-made films (as h-less Russians neatly call them): investigation reveals no more than two of feature-length shown here since N.E.P. These were *Cabin in the Cotton*, a fairly obscure Barthelmess number, and *The Invisible Man*. The latter's "scientific phantasy," a novelty to Soviet audiences, made it a hit. It was the first film dubbed into Russian by the American expert Lars Moen, whose process sets new standards in perfection of this cinematic illusion. (Moen's explanation of this is amusing: he is able to make use of all the dubbing patents in the world except the German, because only Germany has a high enough opinion of Soviet reliability to think a patent worth the trouble of registering in the U.S.S.R.) Moen has now finished dubbing Clair's *Dernier Milliardaire*, and Clair would be interested to hear the chapter-and-verse wisecracks about Nazism which his characters now speak in place of the original vague satire.

No English films have been bought for Soviet consumption. Nor is there any sign of an increase in importation of foreign films, partly because so few have the right "ideology", partly because the highest figure to which the Soviet government will go is mere cigar-money to capitalist producers. An attempt was made to buy *Viva Villa*, and Metro-Goldwyn agreed to the price offered, only adding that they had 49 other films which they would sell at the same figure, all or none. This extension of Stakhanovism to the realm of film-booking aroused no response, and Metro-Goldwyn were presumably told what they might do with *Villa* and the other 49.

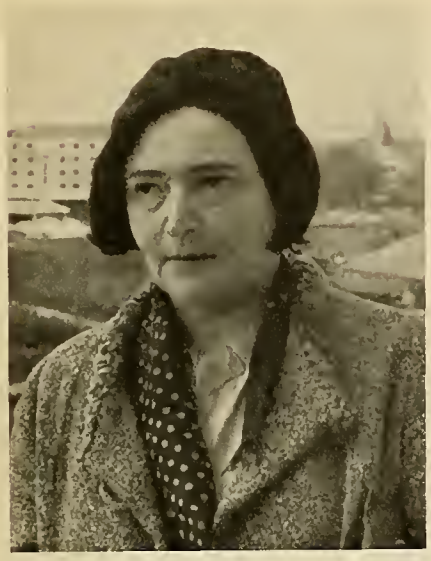
At several Moscow cinemas the current attraction is Alexandrov's *Circus*, the first showing of which to members of the industry I attended the other night. The show was punctuated by little bursts of applauding rapture from groups scattered over the Domkino auditorium, and at the conclusion the director and the radiant platinum-blonde, plucked-eyebrowed star bathed in a shower of the Russian equivalents of "Darling!" and "Marvellous!" from their rivals and colleagues. With a few starched shirts and ermine wraps added one might have thought oneself back in Leicester Square, and clearly it is not only in Hollywood and Elstree that the game of "yessing" is popular. The film is a story of an American circus girl who gives birth to a black baby. Another film now being widely shown is *The Fatherland Calls*, a vision of future war. The airman-hero's little son whimsically decides, on declaration of war, to go to the front and help out. A single enemy 'plane flies over the border, and drops a bomb in the middle of the very field which the young patriot happens to be crossing. Somebody sees the number of the 'plane and in the big fight that follows the father finds it and annihilates it. Worth noting is the fact that, in this film as in Dovzhenko's *Aerograd*, where Japan figures as villain, the enemy in an imaginary war is actually named. The enemy 'planes are clearly marked with swastikas. The film is a technically mediocre version of a tale which even Hollywood is rarely naïve enough to serve up to-day. The dialogue pointing out that the Soviets fight only for defence may be more sincere than it would be in a Hollywood film, but it is not essentially different. In *Circus*, the black baby is the element of Soviet "ideology," but so long as it was illegitimate it need only have had a white skin for the same story to be made in Culver City.

"Peasants"

In *Party Ticket*, another film of the moment, the villain is a factory saboteur, the heroine a Party member whom he steals from the worker-hero; and he borrows the girl's Party ticket to lend it to the sinister "other woman." The characters in such films may be described as Red Army man, udarnik, wrecker, Pioneer, Communist; but one does not have to understand much Russian to know in a few minutes from which familiar pigeon-holes they come.

One would not mention these films were it not for the undeniable fact that they are popular. But it is necessary in this country to accustom oneself to the fact that all films are popular. A vast public, much of it still in the early stages of movie fascination, is hungry for films, and there are nowhere near enough efficient craftsmen to produce them. A failure in our sense of the word does not exist, alternative programmes being so few that almost every film made is seen by every cinema-goer. There are less primitive and "Gollywoody" films to be seen than the above-mentioned. *Report Card* is a charming, sensitive small-time picture of old gymnasium-school life, culminating in a belly-laugh where, the day after the revolution, teacher shuffles in and says: "For our zoology lesson to-day, we will examine the Tsarist government." *Aerograd*, if not entirely successful, is a vigorous film of skirmishes along the forested Manchurian border, with several magnificent passages. *Seekers of Happiness*, the first film of the Birobijan Jewish colony, has good acting and an idea lurking somewhere in it. Dzigan's *We of Kronstadt* (a year old, like *Aerograd*, but still being shown) is a revolutionary picture in the best tradition, in direct line from *Potemkin* and *Chapayev*: a heroic episode of conflict and sacrifice for an ideal, gruesome yet human and even humorous, using in masterly fashion the old Griffith to-the-rescue structure. To be persuaded that one *Circus* does not make a bourgeois U.S.S.R. one has but to hear the storm of ardour this film arouses. It and *Chapayev*, more especially the latter, are re-booked five and six times at the same cinema by public demand.

Chapayev still remains the basis of all discussion in Soviet film circles. It is the only film so far which has with complete success bridged the gulf between the old mass themes and the new individualism. It painted character in the round



Esther Schub *By courtesy of H. V. Meyerowitz*

without sacrificing, indeed greatly heightening, the epic theme of mass-upsurge. But the problem of characterisation is a much more difficult one here than it is in capitalist studios, where individualism and heroism are almost identical and can together be magnified to infinity. If capitalist film characters come out of pigeon-holes it is due to sheer laziness or stupidity on the authors' or producers' part. But in Soviet Russia heroism has a basically different meaning. It is not surprising that, in the early fumblings for the key to the relationship between the individual and socialist society, so many characters emerge preternaturally black or white and grey shades are scarce.

Pudovkin, the Order of Lenin in his buttonhole and the works of the sage lining the bookshelves behind him, wrestled with himself and strode up and down like a caged Samson as he tried to explain these problems and the objectives at which he himself is aiming. He is completing the scenario of a film based on the Chelyuskin episode. "I have a hero," he said. "Now almost by definition one thinks of a hero as a man alone, struggling against opposing forces. In socialist society, the becoming a hero is the beginning of a man's tragedy, because he cannot work alone. That is the theme of my film.

"What is difficult for our critics abroad to understand," he went on, "is the speed at which life here is moving and changing. Neither the cinema nor the other arts have been able to keep up with it. I have come from a meeting of Stakhanovites in the Kremlin; one suddenly sees the new type of human being which is being produced here. Moscow is a new city almost every year and in three years the village has changed down to the last detail. We are men trying to catch something as it passes and pin it down, but the life is too restless and will not let itself be caught; it escapes while you are focussing the camera."

The problem of making *Chapayevs*, not of bloody revolution but of peaceful socialist construction, remains. And meanwhile a vast new field of material begins to unfold itself in the questions of human conduct under functioning socialism: the new roles of women and of youth in Soviet life, motherhood and family relationships, the peasant's reconstruction as collective farmer. Such questions the leaders of Soviet cinema are now beginning hesitantly to tackle, a good part of their hesitancy arising from their desire to hold back until they could show the same technical mastery of the sound film as they did of the silent. Most of them are still vaguely uncertain how to proceed in this new form which suddenly de-internationalised the masses' most potent artistic medium. But the authorities feel that this coyness on the brink of the talkies has lasted quite long enough. Their patience has been very great. It is all right for the directors of *Chapayev* to spend a year "preparing" another film, without exposing a foot of negative. One *Chapayev* is worth fifty *Circuses*, and such directors should be humoured. But it was noticed that, when honours were distributed to the film industry, the supreme slowcoach, Eisenstein, was awarded a certificate which was almost an insult, and a message reached the maestro from Stalin that in the present film famine mere dabbling in metaphysical abstractions was not what the Soviet wanted. Eisenstein then leaped with extraordinary nimbleness into production of a film about the young Soviet martyr who betrayed his kulak father and was killed for his pains; and after eighteen gruelling months the picture is almost finished—it may even be shown by next October.

As far as I am able to estimate Soviet cinema-going mentality, I would say that the *Circuses* of the Alexandrovs are merely assuaging immediate hunger or whetting appetites for more *Chapayev* bread. Such films provide passing entertainment, but there are no grounds for the suggestion that the Soviet public will be willing to let the cinema decay into a mere evening-out hashish such as it has become in England and America.

Though Soviet cinema is going through a mediocre phase, fierce and continuous discussion and self-criticism keep alive the spirit which put it at the head of the class a few years ago. Whether this typically Soviet purgative is good in the long run for the bowels of all the arts is a debatable point; it is certainly beneficial in the cinema, which is a mass art or nothing at all. A visitor accustomed to the complacently constipated film industries of America and England feels refreshed the moment he walks into Eisenstein's outer office at Mosfilm studios and finds, on the wall newspaper, a cartoon by some camera-boy ribbing the maestro for his slowness.

One can go to conference after conference, not of units but of the whole industry, and hear common problems thrashed out and new themes and forms debated. An entire conference devotes itself solely to the development of themes for children's films, and such films now being made are ruthlessly criticised. Directors of "Gollywood" films may have their yes-men to comfort them at the first night, but a day or two later they will have to attend a meeting where they must answer the criticisms of rival directors, of assistant cameramen and scene-painters; and, later still, they must defend themselves against the man-in-the-stalls at public meetings in the cinemas. This lively tradition of criticism still marks the Soviet cinema off from the capitalist cinema. We may expect to see it bearing fruit once more in the films made in 1937 to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Revolution. On the selection of worthy themes for this occasion the new Committee of Arts and the heads of the industry are already busily conferring.

"Day in a City Nursery" (Vufku)

"Passaporto Rosso"

Italy's progress due to State interference, says Robert Kiek

Italy's early experiments with films were not crowned with success. The films themselves were dull and they proved a headache to the financiers. New life, however, was brought to the industry when the Italian Government took an active interest.

The first task the producers set themselves was to find a national hero. The lives of Cavour, Garibaldi, and the latter's heroic wife Anita were considered, but the difficulties of screening them were thought to be insuperable. Finally they decided on Theresa Confalonieri, the national heroine who nobly sacrificed her home happiness for the sake of Italy's glory.

The picture *Theresa Confalonieri*, intelligently directed by Guido Brigone, was presented at the Second International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art at Venice in 1934. Marta Abba, famous interpreter of Pirandello, was an enormous success in the title role and it was only due to the mediocre scenario that the public did not show the enthusiasm that the film deserved.

Italians are critical as no other people in the world and particularly so of their national film industry. This criticism does not come only from the intellectuals but also from the middle-class people, and their strongest objections are to films that are little more than theatrical versions of melodramatic plays.

One would have expected Max Ophuls' *La Signora di Tutti* to meet with success, but this was not the case. Although the story itself was a bit banal, the treatment was grand and the effect poignant.

The fact that *Theresa Confalonieri* was received by the public with much more sympathy than *La Signora di Tutti* strengthened the Government and the producers in their resolve to go ahead with *national* productions.

The most important *national* pictures of the following year were: Mussolini and Forzano's *Hundred Days;* Brigone's *Passaporto Rosso* and Marco Elter's *Le Scarpe al Sole*. Of those the last two were notable in that the theme of *Passaporto Rosso* might have been a prologue to the emigration that was made possible by the victory over the Ethiopians, while *Le Scarpe al Sole* might have been a prologue to the war itself. The former was full of pathos, national flags, national hymns and talk of national glory.

Le Scarpe al Sole is the simple story of a warrior's life during the battles in the Alps. Elter, who had worked in Hollywood, proved a very able director, and the film in my opinion contained more propaganda for peace than Pabst's *Kameradschaft*.

Had not the Italian State interfered in the film industry from the beginning, the Italian Film would no longer exist. This is something new in the fight between the independent film industry and government. In nearly every country where the State tried to protect the national industry, things went wrong. Italy alone managed to keep her head above water. There have been and there will continue to be failures, but Italian production during the last few years has improved enormously—not only in *national*, but in fiction pictures. Among these, Gustav Machaty's *Ballerine*, which will have its première at this year's Biennale, is said to take a prominent place.

As to the documentary film, the Instituto Luce has made excellent pictures. *Littoria* is one of the best documentaries ever produced, and the interest of the State in pictures guarantees a good many more, of the propaganda type, as well as others. Public interest in pictures increases every day, and film societies and amateur ciné-clubs prosper enormously.

Palestine imports more British films

Palestine, the British Mandate, has shown during the last few years a relatively great development in her film industry. Leaving out of account the Arabic population, which—though greater in number—has only a very few cinemas of its own, there are, for the Jewish population of some 400,000, about 25 cinemas of which the majority, with an average of 1,000 seats each, are in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel-Aviv. These cinemas, equipped on up-to-date lines, are popular, and keep a high standard in their programme.

Since import restrictions do not exist in Palestine, some of the best international films are shown in the cinemas: chiefly, Hollywood productions and films with German commentary from Vienna, Prague, and Budapest. Those from Berlin are no longer shown. Films in German are the most popular, as by far the majority of Jewish cinema-goers know German or Yiddish.

Of course, American films are also very much patronised—not so much variety and musical films, but those with a dramatic plot and brief dialogue.

Recently, following the change for the worse in Viennese production, the French film has become popular, since French is still fairly well known throughout the Levant.

Polish and Russian films may also be seen from time to time.

The cinema programme, containing sound news, a long film and sometimes a short one, lasts usually two hours. English and French films are sub-titled and on a little side-screen Hebrew and Arabic translations are shown.

Cinemas are closed on Friday and open again on the evening of the Sabbath.

Some time ago, a British film in Palestine was still a rarity, but last season brought a greater number of British films to the screen, *e.g.*, *Escape Me Never*, *Sanders of the River*, *The Thirty-nine Steps*, *I Give My Heart*, *My Heart's Desire*, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, *Abdul Hamid*, and *Brown on Resolution*.

There is generally a liberal censorship (except for colonial and political problems) and no import restrictions.

Surely the market here for British films could be very much increased.

Venice Exhibition

The French Ministry of Arts in completing the choice of French films for showing at the International Exhibition of Cinematography in Venice listed:

Long films: *Veille d'Armes*, a production of Marcel l'Herbier; *La tendre Ennemie*, by Max Ophüls; *Le Grand Refrain*, by Yves Mirande; *Mayerling*, production of A. Litvak; *Anne-Marie*, production of Raymond Bernardi; *Le Roman d'un Tricheur*, by Sacha Guitry; *L'appel du Silence*, production of Léon Poirier.

Shorts: *Le Discobole*, a '*Three Minutes*', by M. Bellugue; *Le Rouergue*, a touring document by J. C. Bernardi; *Voyage dans le Ciel*, science film by Jean Painlevé; *Le Coin des Enfants* after the music of Debussy; *Jeune fille au Jardin*.

Czechoslovakia develops new style of production

"It is the duty of a small country such as ours to be represented by the Film."

This statement was made by Dr. Edward Benes, President of the Czechoslovakian Republic.

Thanks to the State and certain leaders who have been favourable to the development of the film industry (Masaryk is still a critical and enthusiastic supporter), studios covering a huge

"Janosik"

area and suitable for international productions have been built on the slopes of Barrandow near Prague. Many films which are not Czechoslovakian have been made here including *The Golem* by Duvivier and *Port Arthur* by Farkas.

At one time it seemed as if the industry was limited to the production of petty stilted comedies, but Machaty's *Extase* ensured entry to the European market. In this film Hedy Kiessler, the actress discovered by Max Reinhardt, played the leading part. At the Venice Exhibition it created a sensation.

The second film of international importance was the charming country idyll *Reka*, directed by Revensky. The success of *Reka* not only created international interest in the Czechoslovakian film industry but it also demonstrated the filmic possibilities of the country's scenic beauties. Its magnificent landscapes from the lovely Bohemian ranges, over the mountain panorama of the lofty Tatras to the wooded slopes of the Carpathians are still too little known.

Czechoslovakian films are to be noted for their keen satirical humour, as in *Hej Rup*, and for their screening of middle-class drama.

Marysa, directed by Revensky and winner of the State prize, is played in Mähren. It is a village love story which works up to the traditional ballad climax of death by poisoning. Steeped in Mähren's folk-lore and making use of poetry, the film interweaves song, dance and traditional customs.

A stronger film, *Janosik*, shows the awakening of the Carpathian peasants who at the beginning of the eighteenth century protested against serving foreign rulers. The story of the people's hero, Janosik, comes from the core of a nation that has struggled long and violently against its oppressors. The film is directed by Mac Fric and the hero's part is played by Palo Bielik. It has been shown in England recently.

"Janosik"

Catherine Hessling

CATHERINE HESSLING made her screen début under the direction of her husband, Jean Renoir, the son of the great painter, and since has acted under the direction of Cavalcanti, Lotte Reiniger, Pabst and Pierre Chenal. Discussed acridly by the élite, detested by the 'petits-bourgeois' who are the mainstay of cinema theatres in France, her faults became to a certain extent exaggerated, and in her last silent films (*Le Chaperon Rouge*, for example, which she financed) she became a caricature of herself.

Away from the screen for several years, she took up dancing. In music-hall, as in film, her greatest qualities came to grief. . . . And now she

Catherine Hessling

has begun to appear on the French screen again, no longer as a great 'vedette,' but in secondary parts. Thus she has played the part of a prostitute in *Coralie et Cie*, and Elizabeth, the usurer's sister, in *Crime et Chatiment*.

Painted by the great Renoir, and then by Derain, creator of *La P'tite Lilie* and of *La Marchande d'Allumettes*, Catherine Hessling was the woman-type of the glorious times of 1926 at Paris, the time of the *avant-garde* and of *surrealisme*. The cinema owes her, at any rate, a few unforgettable moments, such as certain phases in *En Rade* and her death in *Nana*.

In the U.S.A. she would certainly have had a career as brilliant as that of Zazu Pitts; the French cinema, too bourgeois, restrained by every sort of petty convention, had no place for her.

French Censorship

Jean Zay, the Minister of Education, proposes to reorganise French censorship. It seems unlikely that censorship will be abolished because the government is well aware of the political value of screen space and unwilling that it should be made available to its opponents. There has been some talk of "preventive censorship." This would mean the submission of scenarios to the censors before the beginning of production (as in Germany). But the general feeling is that the new government will not exercise so severe a control.

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Book Reviews

MOVIE PARADE
by Paul Rotha. Studio Ltd.

Technicians in general believe that the best stills come from the worst films. This will explain the apparent anomalies in Rotha's allotment of space in his book, especially in his own particular field of documentary. We assume from this that he intends the book rather as notes for a history than as a history in itself. We would only prefer the pictures to be longer, cleaner and less crowded looking, even if they had to be fewer.

The cinema, though young, is strangely lacking in documentation and Mr. Rotha is to be congratulated on his work in collecting so much

By courtesy of Paul Rotha
Pauline Frederick in "Madame X"

material. He is not only a technician but a critic, as witness several previous books on films.

Besides the sparse documentation of the cinema is another limiting factor. Few, if any, film historians have had enough philosophy to treat the subject either with breadth, or in relation to economics, and the other big modern problems. For instance, Moussinac, though a communist and an internationalist, treated the history of the film in every country separately.

Rotha divides his films into three sections: Films of Fiction, Films of Fact, and Avant-Garde and Trick Films: each with sub-headings. This method of classification obstructs the study of the film as one developing whole.

It would have been an important contribution to cinema history to have added a series of portraits of early film actors, and to have devoted a separate section to production stills (of which Mr. Rotha doesn't give us enough). Many other subjects for additional chapters suggest themselves: studios, equipment, posters and, very urgently, cinemas themselves, now that some of the most charmingly typical of early picture houses are being pulled down and replaced all over the world.

The purpose of the book is not clear. But it does not set out to be comprehensive. It will give much harmless pleasure to thousands of members of film societies and innumerable film fans.

Films Increase Book Sales

By NORMAN WILSON

ADAPTING SCENARIOS from books, and often playing pitch-and-toss with the story, has long been a merry game of Hollywood and nearer home. Few adapted films, it is true, make "good cinema," but the majority provide satisfactory results at the box-office. Commercially that is sufficient justification for their production. On the same consideration how do they effect the finances of the authors, publishers and booksellers?

Do the sales of a book materially increase when it is filmed? Not always. Second-feature book films, for instance, seldom affect sales. The real "super" generally does, though largely in proportion to the extent the film's publicity is built round the reputation of the book. Everybody, for instance, had heard about *David Copperfield* though probably few of the younger generation had read it. M.G.M. made it their business to remind the world that it was a famous book. The inference was that it must be a great film. It is surprising how many people evidently believed so, for on the release of the film thousands of copies of the book were sold and, presumably, read.

It is not often that the sales of a book rise before the film is exhibited, but such was the case with Korda's *Things to Come*. H. G. Wells's fat prognostication *The Shape of Things to Come*, was everywhere in demand long before production was nearly complete, as was the publication of the scenario "treatment," boosted as a sensational development in literary technique. The astuteness of Korda's publicity in playing up the reputation of author and book has been clearly proved.

Among the filmed books which have shown the most marked increase in sales is Louisa M. Alcott's sentimental classic of American girlhood, *Little Women*. George Cukor's saccharine contribution to America's "decency" campaign must have brought many thousands of pounds to the book trade through the world. Likewise *Pollyanna*, though always a favourite, made new records when filmed. *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, *Miss Barrett's Elopement*, *The Sign of the Cross*, *The Informer*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *The Little Minister*, *Sanders of the River*, and *The Thirty-nine steps*, to name only a few titles at random, showed notable sales increases as soon as they were screened. Even *Bengal Lancer*, which almost everyone knew had little or nothing to do with the film, was largely in demand.

Public libraries, too, experience a heavy run on filmed books, especially when shown locally. They seldom, however, make any special effort to tie-up with the exhibition. The difficulty of doing so, as J. W. Forsyth, Dunfermline Carnegie librarian, explains, is that so great would be the demand for the books that the libraries could not afford to purchase a sufficient number of copies to cope with it. Within a few weeks most of these books, greatly in excess of normal requirements, would be dead stock. To get over this difficulty some libraries make special displays of books which have been filmed over a certain period, thus spreading the demand. Others, with perhaps greater usefulness, draw attention to books dealing with the subjects of given films. For instance, *Things to Come* might suggest several of Wells' own books, Bellamy's *Looking Backwards*, Stapledon's *First and Last Men*, Philip Gibbs's *The Day After To-morrow*, Birkenhead's *The World in 2030 A.D.*—though it is questionable if any public-controlled library would also display a selection of anti-war, Marxist or other political literature.

Whether or not novel-readers like to see their favourite books filmed is for Wardour Street to guess. Booksellers know that given right publicity book-films bring filmgoers into the bookshops. They are even so convinced that films can sell books that through their trade publicity organisation, the National Book Council, they have commissioned Strand Films to make *From Cover to Cover*, a documentary intended to show the ordinary filmgoer the romance and usefulness of books in everyday life.

Is not any film, however bad, performing a useful function if it sends even a few of its audience to read Dostoievsky or Shakespeare?

COLOUR CINEMATOGRAPHY by A. B. Klein (Chapman & Hall, 25*s*.). In order to dispel the "woeful lack" of knowledge of fundamental principles and the relative merits of new processes throughout the whole film world Major Klein, technical director of Gasparcolour, has written a comprehensive historical, theoretical and practical survey of colour cinematography. Each process is elaborately explained with full scientific and technical details, diagrams and illustrations. Aesthetics do not come within the sphere of the book, but the preface sensibly declares that: "As an expressive factor colour in itself must be subordinate to other factors which we recognise as outstanding in the talking picture. It is through the lack of recognition of this subordination that some of the worst mistakes will be made in the early history of the colour film. Because, unless the coloration actually contributes some further value to the power of the impression made on the mind by the film as a whole, its presence is unnecessary, and even disturbing and undesirable."

HISTOIRE DU CINEMA by Bardeche and Brasillach (Denoel et Steele).

Histoire du Cinema is a conscientious piece of work. Apart from its use as a reference book on films, it also tries to analyse the various movements which have influenced the progress of the cinema. In so doing, there is some danger of presenting ready-made critical judgments and rash generalisations about directional style, which vitiate the authority of the book as a whole.

It is interesting to note, for instance, that the authors apparently regard Cavalcanti as of the past, and make no mention of the revolutionary work he has done for sound in England during the last two years.

What is really needed is a real film dictionary, listing all productions chronologically, with the names of those who worked on them, a summary of the story, and a description of the style of the film (with as little subjective criticism as possible).

Meantime, Bardeche and Brasillach have, with the reservations noted, produced a really valuable book.

THE PETRIFIED FOREST. (Archie Mayo—Warner Bros.)
Leslie Howard, Bette Davis.

Here is a film that defies almost all Hollywood's most cherished beliefs, and laughs triumphantly in doing so. No picture was ever more in key with the perilous and saddening pessimism afflicting the world to-day. It is symbolical. Here is the weary traveller on life's high road, dusty, parched and brain-starved, resting at one of life's inns only to meet the love that leads nowhere except to self-sacrifice, the dangers of the wayside that lead only to death. A hostelry in the desert of petrification and carnage. Disillusionment is the menace. Complain if you must at the sentiment of the finish. This is still a picture that must, if you have any feelings, touch your soul. A rare enough thing to find in the cinema to-day.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

(*Cf. James Agate in "Month's Best Criticism."*)

Adapted with particular skill and nicety from Robert Sherwood's stage play, it works out as an extremely intelligent, almost painfully sensitive, study of emotional impacts in the clear light before death in the Arizona desert. It presents an odd group of people in a ramshackle filling station, physically destroyed, but spiritually liberated by the fight between gangsters and State police. *The Petrified Forest* seems to me one of the most genuinely moving pictures I have seen for seasons; it gets under your skin and hurts and excites you; the shadow of the end is on the picture from the beginning, but when it comes it has the unexpected serenity and fitness of death.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

THE GREEN PASTURES. (Marc Connelly and William Keighley—Warner Bros.)
Rex Ingram, Oscar Polk, Eddie Anderson, Hank Wilson, Ernest Whitman, George Reed.

As everyone knows, *The Green Pastures* is a projection of the dreamy imaginings aroused in the minds of his listeners by an aged coloured preacher telling Old Testament stories to a children's Sunday School. One of the strong features of the play was the poverty-stricken bareness of the Heaven it portrayed. One of the principal dangers of the cinema was that Heaven would either be improved beyond any Southern piccaninny's dream or else that the artfulness of its simplicity might seem condescending. The producers have avoided both these pitfalls. Heaven has been improved, but only slightly. God is still a shabby negro preacher, calm, elderly and not too competent. He has notions what to do about the Earth but the notions do not often work. He is still puzzling when the picture ends.

—*Time*

No profane hands have been allowed, in the words of the Second Cleaning Angel, to "gold up" the marvellous and unforgettable felicities of Marc Connelly's naïve, ludicrous, sublime and heartbreaking masterpiece of American folk drama, *The Green Pastures*. It still has the rough beauty of homespun, the irresistible compulsion of simple faith. It ought not to be necessary to repeat the high-lights of a story which is changeless and eternal—when Eddie Anderson's superb Noah feels a twitch of his "buck aguer" and sure enough it turns out to be a sign of rain; when de Lawd tenderly leads the aged and dying Moses upward into a land "a million times nicer dan de land of Cane-yan," and when, after renouncing his people in wrath, he is won back by the wheedling of "de delegation" (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses). Of such stuff is compounded not only the "divine comedy of the modern theatre" but something of the faith that moves mountains. It is, indeed, hard not to like the simple and gratifying theology of *The Green Pastures* as much as anything about it. It has concreteness and gives one a nostalgic feeling that it ought to be true and that if it isn't we are all, somehow, obscurely the worst for it.

—B. R. C., *The New York Times*

THE MONTH'S BEST CRITICISM

In *The Petrified Forest* Mr. Howard is given a defeatist to play and plays him admirably. Alan Squier is an unsuccessful novelist who hopes by what is virtually suicide to turn his own artistic failure into the self-fulfilment of an Arizona waitress. The waitress, who is half-French, wants to be a great figure and the fifth in a quintet whose other members are Joan of Arc, George Sand, Mme. Curie and the Dubarry. The two get held up by a bandit, and the author has himself shot so that he may die happy in the arms of his beloved. This seems to me to be a bit more of the preposterous nonsense so much in vogue to-day. The corrective for it is a passage from Stevenson, which I recommend to all modern espousers of this fashion, not forgetting my good friend, Mr. Charles Morgan:

"There is a great deal of very vile nonsense talked upon both sides of the matter: tearing divines reducing life to the dimensions of a mere funeral procession, so short as to be hardly decent; and melancholy unbelievers yearning for the tomb as if it were a world too far way. Both sides must feel a little ashamed of their performances now and again when they draw in their chairs to dinner. Indeed, a good meal and a bottle of wine is an answer to most standard works upon the question."

But our novelist in this film has obviously read two standard works upon this question, *The Fountain* and *Sparkenbroke*. At least fountains of Sparkenbrokish stuff pour from him as he lies under the kitchen table in a beleaguered hut with rifle-fire pouring through the windows. The point arises as to whether pretentious nonsense masquerading as intellectuality is an advance. One wonders what Walthamstow and Barking will make of phrases like "pangs of frustration" and "apostle of individualism." The film is saved by the genuine wit with which Mr. R. E. Sherwood sprinkles his high-falutin'. It is remarkable for the acting of Mr. Humphrey Bogart as the "killer," whose every word I implicitly believed. One must always separate the part from the player. That Squier should be a vapouring ass does not detract from my admiration of Mr. Howard's presentation of the fair, the chaste, the inexpressive He. Miss Bette Davis plays the waitress with an industrious charm and a white of eye which would make the fortune of a rocking-horse.

—James Agate, *The Tatler*

MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY. (Frank Lloyd—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
Charles Laughton, Clark Gable, Franchot Tone.

I think we are justified in a fairly sentimental gesture of gratitude to America for making this British patriotic picture. From first shot to last bar of recording it is a love-song to this island of sea-men, to their ships, and their stout hearts, their discipline and their integrity, to the course they hold to and the stars they follow. The Americans have, in generous measure, the quality of admiration, and it does not seem to them fulsome to praise the things they admire. The Americans believe that the British Navy has always been a darn good navy. In the *Bounty* film they say so.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

The movie people have done a good, solid, fine job with *Mutiny on the Bounty*. And in two aspects of the whole, I think, there are indications even of inspiration. There was something that we outsiders, anyhow, can call inspiration in the handling of the sea itself. It seemed to me that such care had been taken in all these scenes that I could detect the difference between the colour of the sky above the English Channel and that above the doldrums. The second item to be labelled under inspiration is Charles Laughton. I suspect Mr. Laughton enjoys showing us what a sense of duty can do to one. Bligh believes that a captain must behave as he did. He is heroic, judicious, and even fair in the crisis of the small boat on its four-thousand-mile voyage. In spite of the flogging, the torture, the maggots, Bligh is pitiful somehow, but that doesn't make him any less formidable.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Mutiny on the Bounty is the spirit of the British Empire shot on the wing, taken up tenderly, stuffed with care and presented on M.G.M.'s most shining platter. It has everything—romance, adventure, death, torture, the pangs of despised love, a chase, storms at sea, naval processions, and a good peppering with sadism. This gives the piece the most piquant box-office tang of the year. It is pointless to pretend to weigh it critically. Its price is in silver and braid. It's about men of steel and hearts of oak. If you want them take them. I'll take Shirley Temple and a heart of gold. —Alistair Cooke

SUZY. (George Fitzmaurice—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer).
Jean Harlow, Franchot Tone, Cary Grant, Lewis Stone.

Platinum blonde or brownette, Miss Harlow is, if she will pardon the expression, my meat. When, as in *Suzy*, she has a good role as a chorus girl barging about London and Paris during the

years of the World War, and is surrounded by competent colleagues, the total effect is almost too much. There hasn't been a good, rousing picture about World War aviators and blondes for quite a while, come to think of it. Franchot Tone, Cary Grant and Lewis Stone stand by Miss Harlow nobly, making *Suzy* something that you really ought to see.

—Russell Maloney, *The New Yorker*

Suzy must have been born under the sign of Capricorn. With padded horns of dialogue and venerable plot whiskers, it plunges across the screen, creates some mild excitement and careens out again, leaving us with a few æsthetic bruises and a feeling that a little fresh air would do no harm. Interest picks up when the denouement is reached, with the old spy ring taking an active part in the plot again, and the war is permitted to step between Miss Harlow and a four-inch lens. But it is scarcely adequate compensation for the romantic balderdash that has gone before.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

LABURNUM GROVE. (Carol Reed—B.F.D.) Edmund Gwenn, Cedric Hardwicke, Victoria Hopper.

The film version of Mr. J. B. Priestley's *Laburnum Grove* is, to all intents and purposes, a photographically exact reproduction of the play, which is the story of a decent suburban middle-aged householder, respectability written all over him, who is, on his own confession, a crook, and has been for years. Had this film been produced in Hollywood it might have been the greatest possible fun (it is that and more, already) but Mr. Priestley's tale might have "gone west" amid suburbanites and policemen engaged by the thousand.

—Philip Page, *The Sphere*

Here at last is an English film one can unreservedly praise. Nine directors out of ten would simply have canned the play for mass consumption: Mr. Reed has made a film of it. His camera has gone behind the dialogue, has picked out far more of the suburban background than Mr. Priestley could convey in dialogue or the stage illustrate between its three walls; the hideous variegated Grove itself, the bottled beer and the cold suppers, the crowded fernery, the little stuffy bedrooms with thin walls, and the stale cigarette smoke and Bertie's half-consumed bananas. Suburbia, one of the newest suburbias, where the gravel lies lightly still over what was grass and clover, insinuates itself into every shot.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

UNDER TWO FLAGS. (Frank Lloyd—Paramount.)
Claudette Colbert, Victor McLaglen, Ronald Colman, Rosalind Russell, Nigel Bruce.

The sequence of lurid romances which made "Ouida" so popular in the 'nineties has long since been forgotten. Yet a little more than a decade ago the silent film caught the imagination with a vigorous adaptation of *Under Two Flags*. In the present version of Ouida's drama of sacrificial love and punitive war there is no vitality; no Cigarette with life, and no desert that scorches. The scenes in the barracks, with which the film opens, have a studio atmosphere; the French legionnaires are obviously "extras" in uniform; and the battle an ill-managed Bisley.

—*The Times*

This tale of the Foreign Legion contains almost every known movie situation, some of them convincing, many the opposite. I could never believe in this queer Claudette, who wore a Legion cap and followed the boys into the firing zone, nursed them, pampered them, and generally behaved like a character from E. M. Hull. Nor could I believe in this rivalry between Colonel McLaglen and Sergeant Colman, the officer loving the Legion girl, the Legion girl loving the sergeant, and the sergeant loving the English aristocrat who turned up in richest Schiaparelli on the edge of the desert. It is swaggering, old-fashioned movie, unashamed hokum, produced with an eye to the ninepennies.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

"Mutiny on the Bounty"

"A Tale of Two Cities"

"Under Two Flags" (Production still)

MICKEY'S POLO TEAM. (Walt Disney.)

Mickey Mouse and his pals, the big bad wolf and the enraged duck, are pictured in a polo game against the human comedians of the screen—Chaplin, Harpo Marx, Laurel and Hardy. Chaplin gets fairly gracious treatment—a light caricature of his use of the cane. Harpo Marx, mounted on an ostrich whose face is the twin of his own, is allowed to get a few laughs with his triumphantly nonsensical inventions. But Laurel and Hardy are pitilessly satirised, their narrow repertory of expressions reduced to a cartoon formula—Laurel's grin, Hardy's fumbling with his necktie. And Hardy is introduced by a close-up of a horse's behind. The cartoon is no sly commentary. It has a vicious undertone; and when the whole lot of Hollywood comedians are slammed off the screen in a terrific final collision, Disney seems to have expressed his opinion of Hollywood. The horses are triumphant, riding their actors at the close.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

A TALE OF TWO CITIES. (Jack Conway—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Ronald Colman, Elizabeth Allen, Donald Woods, Edna May Oliver, Blanche Yurka, Henry B. Walthall, Basil Rathbone.

Ronald Colman's performance as the whimsical, sardonic, dissolute Sydney Carton is the most brilliant of his career. He acts with such complete sincerity and conviction that he brings a dampness to the most cynical eye.

—*The Times of India*

I think it is probably a very superior piece of work, and I salute the producers for their enterprise. It just fidgeted me rather, the lines were so pat, and the love story so wistful, and the music "off" so incorrigibly ethereal. I had forgotten that Darnay was such a bore, and Lucie such a prig, and the great Sydney Carton such a thespian darling. But there is no doubt about the dramatic immortality of the story—so far as the cinema is concerned, it is a far, far better thing that Dickens does than he has ever done, and a far, far bigger public it goes to than he has ever known.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

THE PRINCESS COMES ACROSS. (William K. Howard—Paramount.)

Carole Lombard, Fred MacMurray, Alison Skipworth.

With the subtlety of a sledge hammer, the film pounds away at the pin-sized story about the ambitious Brooklyn girl who poses as a princess to win a Hollywood movie contract. Dressed up with a few shipboard murders, a romance with a personable concertina player and the usual gold-and-ivory Paramount settings, *The Princess Comes Across* just about gets across as a mild-to-boresome comedy.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

The princess is on her way to act in Hollywood, and the Royal lips, sharing with us a liking for make-believe, have uttered nothing but "whoppers." The wide spaces of mid-ocean provide the isolation necessary for this happy type of social comedy; aboard this ship a neat phrase is of more account than a sensible act elsewhere. One smiles and is content. Though the ice may be brittle-thin and growing hourly more transparent, the depths so inconsiderately revealed are less murky than untimely—one movement of Mr. Fred MacMurray's expressive shoulders will brush the inconvenience out of the story.

—*The Times*

"Seven Sinners"

SEVEN SINNERS. (Albert de Courville—Gaumont-British.)

Constance Cummings, Edmund Lowe.

The general quality of the film is melodramatic, almost in the "thick ear" sense, but it is relieved in that respect by the pictorial skill of the rail disasters, the shrewd wit of the dialogue, the intimate revelations of skilled detective methods, and the ingenuity of the climax, in which the villain is shot soon after seeing one of his own smashes on the screen at a G.-B. News Theatre.

—G. A. Atkinson, *The Sunday Referee*

Seven Sinners is an English film remarkable in that it has no cluster of stars, no midnight preview, no big press campaign, but is a competent, sparkling, fast-moving, well directed and well acted film. The story deals with a train-wrecking criminal whose identity is kept secret till the last reel. No single aspect of the film stands out, but every element, from direction to decor, fits in its place, without dislodging its neighbour. *Seven Sinners* makes no film history, but is worth seeing.

—*The New Statesman and Nation*

OURSELVES ALONE. (Brian Desmond-Hurst—B.I.P.)

John Lodge, Niall MacGinnis, John Loder, Antoinette Cellier.

The grim realism of *The Informer* still lingers in the memory. It remains the classic film of the Irish Revolution. When you see this British effort, you will guard yourself against all unfair-mindedness. If you can, your honest, unbiased opinion of *Ourselves Alone* must be that it is an equally praiseworthy piece of work.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

Mr. Brian Desmond-Hurst's *Ourselves Alone* is one of the silliest pictures which even an English studio has yet managed to turn out. It has been extravagantly praised, even compared favourably with *The Informer*, and yet I defy any normal person to find more than one effective sequence, more than one good sentence, in this sentimental and melodramatic story of the Irish Rebellion.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

It is a thoroughly English film. Clearly whoever decides these things thought that "young Irish hearts in rebellion fighting for freedom and ideals" as the publicity puts it, was not enough. Box office demanded more. So we have a nice triangle between best friends John Lodge and John Loder, as officers in the R.I.C., and the girl Maureen (Antoinette Cellier). All of this is tucked on to a really exciting picture of Irish rebellion. *The Informer* wedded the material to individuals and created a natural whole; *Ourselves Alone* never achieves this.

—*The New Statesman and Nation*

SATAN MET A LADY. (William Dieterle—Warner Bros.)

Bette Davis, Warren William, Arthur Treacher, Alison Skipworth.

A cynical farce of elaborate and sustained cheapness, it causes intelligent actors and actresses to behave like numskulls and deserves to be quoted as a classic of dullness. So disconnected and lunatic are the picture's incidents, so irrelevant and monstrous its people, that one lives through it in constant expectation of seeing a group of uniformed individuals appear suddenly from behind the furniture and take the entire cast into protective custody.

—B. R. C., *The New York Times*

"A Night at the Opera"

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA. (Sam Wood—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
The Marx Brothers.

A Night at the Opera, which is, oddly enough, quite largely about a night at the opera, seems to be the best of all the Marx Brothers pictures so far. A book could be written—if Harpo didn't eat it first, or Groucho and Chico tear it up page by page—on the art of the Marxes. You could call it surrealism, or destructivism, or dadaism, or what about that -ism that all depends on the use of staircases? You could analyse its clear, cold illogic, entirely divorced from emotion. There is nothing persuasive about the Marx Brothers. Nothing could cajole you into loving that pop-eyed trio against your will. They are like tripe or creme de menthe, the murder game, or Hitler. You take them, or you don't take them. Personally, I take them, and, as man says to-day so simply and elliptically, how.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

A Night at the Opera had every virtue that *Modern Times* lacked. Beautifully and carefully built by George Kaufman, pruned by a preliminary road-tour on which the perceptive Harpo kept a critical notebook, it came sprucely to Hollywood without the old cluttering of irrelevant whimsy, without having to snatch gags from the air to fill in ninety minutes. The Marx Brothers are not unique. They are a thousand American comedians brought to the boil. And their dialogue always has a pointed application (Bloomsbury, unaware of the institution being parodied, takes refuge in calling it surrealism).

—Alistair Cooke, *Sight and Sound*

THE SINGING KID. (William Keighley—First National.)
Al Jolson, Sybil Jason, Cab Calloway, Edward Everett Horton.

Staggering from the London Pavilion into the carbon-monoxide of Piccadilly Circus, I felt that not only could one have too much of Al Jolson, but also that Cab Calloway and Band in the same picture made me appreciate the soothing peace of road-drills. —P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

Sybil Jason supports Al Jolson, a gentleman whose curious preoccupation with the mammy of the species has never justified his existence, so far as I am concerned. Jolson is one of those personality players who can only get over in pictures if they happen to have personality, which is a rude remark and intended to imply that where Mr. Jolson is concerned my perception is underdeveloped.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

AND SUDDEN DEATH. (Charles Barton—Paramount.)
Frances Drake, Randolph Scott, Tom Brown.

How well Hollywood can punch a message home on the rare occasions when it has one to deliver. Here is Paramount saying "Drive carefully" in a vigorous and interesting film. The hero is a traffic superintendent (Randolph Scott), the heroine a rich girl (Frances Drake) with an itch for speed. The picture bears the stamp of fearful reality in its road scenes, and has its romantic idyll, too. —Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

The film isn't as violent a lecture as you might expect, and it is considerably padded with the gentle romance between the officer in charge of traffic and the beautiful heiress who likes to hit seventy. In spite of its substantial subject matter, the picture is pretty much on the light side.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

MARY OF SCOTLAND—(John Ford—RKO)
Katharine Hepburn, Fredric March.

There is a blend of excellence and mere adequacy in this picture which curbs our tongue when we would use the word "magnificent," and limits us to the less glowing epithet "impressive." A loud and blustering adventure story one minute, a poignant tragedy of two lovers the next, *Mary of Scotland* is almost as contradictory a picture as its subject has been under the eyes of her many biographers. Miss Hepburn's performance is at variance with the accepted notion of Mary in those moments where boldness, implacability and high resolve were needed; but she is altogether admirable in those scenes where the Queen was womanly, tender, impetuous and of high courage. Had she been able to meet both moods, she might have counted it her greatest characterisation.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Mary of Scotland (RKO) presents Mary Stuart (Katharine Hepburn) as a somewhat jittery young woman who suffers the extraordinary penalty of having her head chopped off for nothing much more than a blunder by her social secretary.

Playwrights of historical drama are indisputably licensed to rewrite history. Equally indisputably, the licence must be earned by writing drama. The fault in *Mary of Scotland*—a prose adaptation by Dudley Nichols of Maxwell Anderson's blank verse stage piece—is not that its most dramatic moments (*e.g.* Elizabeth's visit to Mary in the Tower of London) are apocryphal; it is that its most historically conscientious moments are not dramatic. To show the basic cause of Mary's downfall as a blunder by well-meaning Rizzio may be good history but it is bad fiction. It transforms her career from high tragedy to a series of unhappy accidents.

—*Time*

W.F.N. SELECTION

The Green Pastures	**
Mutiny on the Bounty	*
The Petrified Forest	*
A Night at the Opera	*
A Tale of Two Cities	*

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

The Petrified Forest
The Green Pastures
Mutiny on the Bounty
Suzy
Laburnum Grove
Mickey's Polo Team
A Tale of Two Cities
The Princess Comes Across
And Sudden Death
Ourselves Alone
Under Two Flags
Satan Met a Lady
Seven Sinners
A Night at the Opera
The Singing Kid
Mary of Scotland

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By ANDREW BUCHANAN

Author of "Films: The Way of the Cinema"

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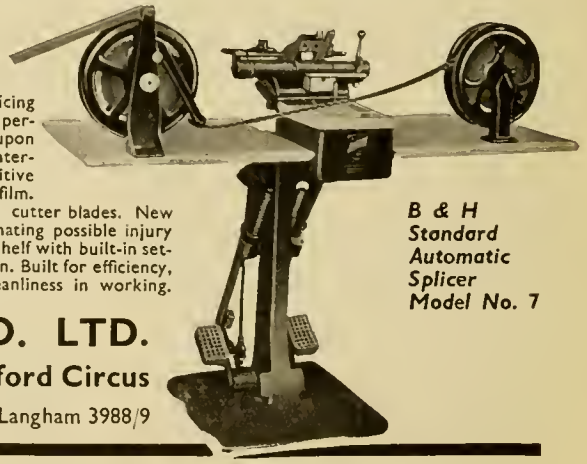

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Television fails to reach Home-Movie Standard, say Americans

THE VEIL of secrecy surrounding R.C.A.'s research into television was partly drawn aside when the Corporation recently staged a demonstration in New York to an invited audience of 225 of its own licensees.

Since June 29th, when the 10-kilowatt transmitter at the summit of the Empire State Building was officially opened, R.C.A. engineers have worked day and night to make the first performance a smooth one. Early tests confronted them with noise in the amplifiers and a none-too-clear image. But by the date-line of the show the transmitter, together with its iconoscope cameras and film-reproducing equipment, was working its best.

Speeches by R.C.A. chiefs opened the proceedings. Major-General J. G. Harboard (Chairman) and David Sarnoff (President) reviewed the march of television progress. Then Otto S. Shairer (Vice-President, and R.C.A.'s patents officer) informed the gathering that although there were now only three television receivers operating in the city area, he estimated that within a short time the corporation would have more than a hundred licensed receivers distributed at various points for testing purposes. The design of commercial receivers, he said, had not up to the present been planned.

The show proper then began. The programme consisted of:—

1. Dance by twenty girls, introduced as the Water Lily Ensemble.
2. Televised films: Views of the "Mercury" streamlined express, and fashion models from a Fifth Avenue store.
3. Interviews with leaders of the radio industry.
4. Sketches by Henry Hull (well-known American writer), Graham MacNamee (crack announcer) and Ed Wynn (radio comedian).
5. Televised film: U.S. Army manœuvres.

The size of the images was seven by five inches and their quality is reported as "faintly greenish in colour." A description of the receiving set used says that in operation the cabinet lid is tilted, and the spectator may see the reflected picture in a mirror on its under side. This tallies closely with the receiver at present made by the Baird Company in England, but the Baird set gives a pure black and white image and a considerably larger picture.

The show stirred its audience into opinion and controversy. One expert present said: "Extremely interesting, but a long way off the home. Does not equal home movies in clarity or dimension of picture, although the images were splendid in the conditions." The reference to home-movie standards arises from a note by the American Radio Manufacturers' Association in which they claim that television, before becoming a commercial proposition, must achieve technical conditions in which any set can receive any transmission within range, with a picture comparable to home-movie quality.

An interesting upshot of the demonstration was that uninvited listeners, eavesdropping on the performance by means of specially built ultra-short-wave receivers, were able to pick up images as far as ninety miles away from the transmitter. This seems to indicate that the B.B.C. engineers, in claiming for Alexandra Palace a probable range of only 25 miles, may be speaking with the voice of cautious pessimism.

Meanwhile general American opinion concurs with a report by the Research Council of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which appeared simultaneously with the R.C.A. demonstration. This report states that "television has reached a point in its laboratory development where a small picture with moderate entertainment value can be transmitted, but with far more complicated equipment than motion picture recording and sound broadcasting require."

Meanwhile the extent to which America is guided by British television development is indicated by the fact that since the demonstration in New York, David Sarnoff has crossed to London and visited Gerald Cock at the B.B.C. Following his investigation of British progress, he is reported to have moved on to Berlin to examine the television plans of the TeleFunken company.

E.M.I. Television Camera

French Listeners Demand Peace by Radio

"Radio, fruit of the disinterested labour of scientists and research-workers, and one of the most marvellous discoveries of the human brain, has been diverted from the uses to which history and civilisation demand that it should be put.

"To bring men together and so serve the cause of peace, to widen education, to disseminate culture, to bring knowledge and beauty to every fireside: these are the great tasks which the power of money has forbidden radio to fulfil.

"The great mass of listeners, ever seeking progress and liberty, have so far submitted to the conditions which have been forced upon them. They have submitted through lack of organisation.

"From this discontent among listeners the conception of Radio Liberté arose."

So begins the manifesto of Radio Liberté, an association formed in January of this year to further the interests of French wireless listeners.

Within six months of its foundation Radio Liberté has gained a membership of 35,000 spread over 70 branches in various parts of France.

Radio Liberté's demands include: better programmes all round; radio to serve the cause of peace wherever possible; suppression of the censorship; abolition of private sponsored transmission. Its main activities are the publication of a monthly bulletin, hitherto confined to members, but soon to be available to the public, the organisation of lectures, and the maintenance of advisory departments on legal and technical questions relating to radio.

The Administrative Council is headed by Paul Langewin, Professor of the Collège de France, and includes among its members Vaillant-Couturier (chief editor of *Humanité*), Léon Blum (Premier), Pierre Cot (Minister for Air), and Edouard Serre (Technical Director of Air France). The 'Comité d'Honneur' includes M. Daladier, M. Frot, M. Piot (editor of *L'Oeuvre*), and a formidable list of senators, deputies and councillors.

Under French broadcasting law, government radio stations are run by a committee of twenty, of which ten members represent listeners and ten the government. The committees are elected every two years. Radio Liberté is petitioning the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs to hold an election next January (although one is not normally due) in order to gain representation for its growing membership.

The detailed programme of the association, issued with the manifesto, includes the following specific demands:—

Suppression of the censorship, since it has no place under a democratic régime.

Access to the microphone for leaders of political parties, and for the spokesmen of economic and social organisations.

Reduction of the radio tax.

Tax-free radio for unemployed, for old-age pensioners, for disabled ex-servicemen, and for the victims of industrial accidents.

Immediate closing-down of transmitting stations which do not serve the great centres of population (*e.g.* Ile de France, Rennes, Radio-Cité).

Revision of the Lucerne wave-length agreement in order to overcome present jamming between European stations.

Relaying of æsthetically important events of all kinds, including the activities of cultural associations, both from within France and from other countries.

Full transmission or subsequent reporting of great social events. Broadcasting of important debates in the Chambre and the Sénat.

Relaying of courses from the Sorbonne which have a general educational, scientific or social value.

The B.B.C. Recording Van on the "Royal Sovereign"

Battleships and Broadcasting

By LAURENCE GILLIAM

During Navy Week the B.B.C. Feature Department broadcast a programme dealing with a routine day on board a battleship. This actuality programme represented a great advance on previous efforts in treatment and dramatisation of material. The sequence showing the handling of the ship in battle-practice was perhaps the best piece of creatively constructed sound the B.B.C. has yet done.

In this article, Laurence Gilliam, the producer of the programme, outlines what was involved in its making and indicates how the new production methods may be developed in future actuality work.

Every producer knows the difference between a good natural subject and one which he has to twist and torture to the demands of his medium. What made a battleship a good "natural" for broadcasting was, first, the appeal which things naval and mechanical have, and, more important, the complete and self-contained character of the ship—a quality which maintained the unity of the scene in spite of the many perplexing technicalities. As an instrument a battleship is so precise, so ordered to the demands of its job, that any exposition of it, either in sound or in pictures, acquires a satisfactory shape if it can remain faithful to the original.

The theme of the programme was a simple one—a picture in sound of a day in the life of a battleship. The script made provision for a possible, if not a normal day, covering the ship's routine, calling the hands at five-thirty, preparing for sea, leaving harbour, then a middle section of battle practice, and finally, the return to harbour. Five days were allotted for recording. The first two were spent in reconnaissance and tests, and "shooting" was to continue for three days.

Our unit numbered seven; there was Woodroffe, the commentator, two recording engineers, two assistants, the van driver, who acted on board as an additional assistant, and myself. The recording van, equipped with double turntable disc recorders, was hoisted on board and lashed to the boat deck. The boat deck was chosen as the most convenient central and stable position, as we intended to record both in harbour and at sea.

The general plan for each day's recording was worked out on the previous night with the Commander. The van's resources allowed four microphone positions to be operating at any one moment, but in practice we found it simpler to run the leads out to each position in turn. In this way we covered the main scenes—the quarter deck, the mess decks, the fore bridge, the gun turrets and the fo'c'sle. The Admiral's sea cabin became a permanent studio, ideal in acoustic until we discovered that the crank of the helm from the fore bridge to the engine-room passed right through it.

Looking back on it now, it all seems rather queer and strange—being called in one's cabin with tea about five o'clock, getting into a curiously miscellaneous uniform of flannels, sea boots and muffler, and stumbling up on deck to meet the strange contours of a battleship in the light of early morning.

One of our first sequences was the recording of 'the hands' being called. We had concealed microphones in the mess decks and hoped to get some authentic free-and-easy "wild track." We were not too successful, although we tried every morning, getting little beyond an assortment of early morning coughs, or the rattle of a tea-can; the Navy, we found, were distressingly silent at this time of the morning. We had better luck with other parts of the routine. "Hands falling in" yielded little apart from a brisk succession of orders, bugle-calls and doubling feet; but with the ceremonies of "Colours" and "Divisions and Prayers," the microphone had something to bite on. The quarter deck at "Colours," with the ranks of the ship's company in the rig of the day, the Royal Marine Band, the officers in blue and gold, the lively airs and the slow hoisting of the White Ensign had a formal quality well suited to a sound description. "Divisions and Prayers" an hour later had the same static ceremonial quality; a little startling to the unaccustomed ear when the final "amen" was followed after about one second's pause with the brisk order: "Divisions—'shun" from the Commander; you can watch and pray on a battleship, but not for long.

The next episode, "hoisting the cutter," had much more movement about it and in spite of technicalities gave scope for a real sound picture with the orders repeated in the bell-like voice of the bos'n, the tramp of the feet of the hauling party, the sound of the "falls" as the cutter was hoisted up to the davit head. Commentary over this, explaining each order and its effect, added perspective to the scene.

Our next sequence was designed to show the battleship in action. Here again it seemed most effective to recapture the ship's actual routine. The sequence started with the report: "Enemy in sight." The reaction of the Flag Ship to this information was traced at three points. First, in the fore top, where the spotting officer and his assistants, searching the horizon through binoculars, passed their comments through voice-pipes strapped to their chests down to the transmitting station. Second, in the transmitting station, four decks down, where the information was correlated by mechanical range-finders and passed back to the fore top and the turrets. Third, in the gun turret, the most dramatic place in the whole ship; a circular steel tomb, crammed with sixty-odd men, gathered round the gleaming breeches of the fifteen-inch guns. It sounded like hell with the lid off, with an incessant din of orders repeated and shouted against the clang and roar of loading and reloading the guns.

In this firing sequence, the whole complex organisation of the ship, human and mechanical, was concentrated on one subject. By cross-cutting the different scenes in the process, one was able to give a cross-section of a battleship in action which was practically self-explanatory and indeed one which few whose whole lives are spent on the job ever get so completely.

Then came the aircraft attack. Here again the sound scheme was simple enough; after the report "enemy aircraft bearing red six five" the microphone swung from approaching aircraft to gun stations. As the aircraft drew nearer, the ship opened fire. First the anti-aircraft guns, then, as bombers zoomed down, one by one the rest of the ship's armament, pom poms and machine guns, came into play. So from these two distinct sound elements, zooming aircraft and gun fire, one was able to build up a picture of the aircraft attack which spoke for itself.

We ended the programme by contrasting the grimness of the battle practice with some of the aspects of the unofficial life on the ship—recreations, personalities and types peculiar to the battleship. We grouped them together in a "Dog Watch" sequence. Here we were up against more familiar problems of microphone interviewing and reporting. Such things as the ship's unofficial band with its experts on drums and spoons, its tap dancer and its announcer, the sounds of physical training and games on the quarter deck, and the contrasted voices of such odd job men as the wardroom attendant, the temperature man, the ship's barber and the tailor, enabled us to reflect the very real change that comes over a battleship after the "Stand easy" has been sounded.

Children Should Plan School Broadcasts

This plea for a Children's Broadcasting Society comes from a practising teacher of foreign languages who has made a wide study of the problems and opportunities of school radio.

AT PRESENT, the role of children in the Children's Hour is mainly that of listeners. Only occasionally do they appear at the microphone to act small parts which have been assigned to them. Therefore they have no active influence on Broadcasting at all. Adult opinion, on the other hand, differs widely concerning the purpose of the Children's Hour. Many hold this purpose to be pure entertainment, something "to occupy their minds." Others lay stress upon the value of information additional to that received in school, and a third group wish to give scope to those interests which can only be superficially stimulated during school hours.

Little information is as yet available about the reaction of the average child to the Children's Hour. But there are at hand studies of child development in general on which experiments might be based. The important age group from 7 to 11 years is covered by the Report of the Consultative Committee on the Primary School (Board of Education, 1931). Its general conclusions as set out in the introduction to the Report, may well be applied beyond the limits of school education. "Man is a social animal, and the school is a society. The school . . . is able to offer fuller and more varied opportunities for activity than is possible for a single family." Broadcasting can do so as well. Its task is to help develop the social side in children as well as the imaginative and intellectual. The value of tales about fairies and animals is indisputable. Equally indisputable is the value of realistic accounts of historic or present-day events. But there seems to be a gap between the imaginative and the realistic side in broadcasting to children. I suggest this gap can be bridged by one thing only: co-operation of the children themselves.

In what way can children co-operate in broadcasting? That is the question which should be solved by experiment based upon experience. Here again, the recommendations of the Consultative Committee are of value. They speak of "the large place which should be given to games, singing, dancing, drawing, acting and craftsmanship." They describe children of Primary School age as "active and inquisitive, delighting in movement, in small tasks that they can perform with deftness and skill; . . . intensely interested in the character and purpose—the shape, form, colour and use—of the materials around them; at once absorbed in creating their own miniature world of imagination and emotion, and keen observers who take pleasure in reproducing their observations by speech and dramatic action." Here, I think, we have a recipe which is far from being applied at the moment. If it were to be tried, the following might be the first practical steps:

(1) Form a National Children's Broadcasting Society with as many local groups as possible.
(2) Co-opt into each group adult specialists on every aspect of broadcasting, *i.e.* writers, critics, technicians, teachers, artists, musicians.
(3) Encourage the children to bring to their group ideas and initiative of their own. Try their suggestions experimentally *under conditions similar to wireless transmission and reception.*
(4) Select from each group the best results of such experiments to be tried out as items in the Children's Hour.

By such a method, contact might at last be established between the children who form the audience and the broadcasting service which is destined to reach them.

Battleships and Broadcasting—(cont.)

I think the main lesson to be learnt from this show was the importance of commentary to recorded documentary. In this naval programme the difficulty was intensified by the fact that the sounds are unfamiliar to a very large part of the audience. Sounds of bugle calls and orders make strange and attractive patterns, but if left to speak for themselves would become unintelligible. So commentary was made to take the foreground. All commentary was recorded on board immediately after the shooting of any particular scene; in this way we were able to make notes of our first-hand impressions. From these roughs the final commentary was written and re-recorded after the sound sequences has been cut. Of great assistance in capturing the "eye-witness" quality was the method by which Woodroffe was able to post-record his commentary, listening on head-phones to the sounds of the scene he was describing, instead of working "cold" from script.

This was the first full-length feature programme to be transmitted entirely from records. It ran for forty-five minutes, and was based on roughly 1,000 minutes of recorded material. To the film director this may seem a small margin, but to the radio producer, it represents a fairly high costing.

British Television News

The British Standards Institute is engaged in seeking standard definitions for technical terms used in television engineering. It is expected that their recommendations, if accepted, will do much to prevent a confusion similar to that which grew up during the first years of radio manufacture.

It will be remembered that the court of arbitration held under the auspices of the B.S.I. early this year did good service to the non-theatrical field by clearing up the muddle resulting from the existence of two conflicting sets of 16-mm. sound film standards.

* * *

The first test transmissions from Alexandra Palace were broadcast on August 12th. The Baird system was used. The tests consisted of televised films and included excerpts from the Gaumont-British News, *Chu Chin Chow* and a Grace Moore film.

No transmission schedule is announced, but owners of reception sets should be able to pick up sound and picture nearly every day from now onwards. The sound wavelength is 7.2 metres and the visual 6.7 metres.

B.B.C. Events

Tuesday, Sept. 1st, 8.0 p.m.: *Light Fare.* (Producer, Ernest Longstaffe.) NATIONAL. 8.20 p.m.: Dvorak Promenade Concert. REGIONAL.

★Wednesday, Sept. 2nd, 8.0 p.m.: Bach Promenade Concert. NATIONAL. 11.5 p.m.: Walker Cup Commentaries from America. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Sept. 3rd, 3.50 p.m.: Talk, *Taste and Tradition.* John Davenport. NATIONAL. 8.40 p.m.: Sandy Powell's Road Show Company. (Producer, A. W. Hanson.) NATIONAL.

Friday, Sept. 4th, 7.25 p.m.: Blackpool Concert Party. NATIONAL. 8.20 p.m.: Beethoven Promenade Concert. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Sept. 5th, 4.15 p.m.: Ulster T.T. Race from Belfast. NATIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: Feature programme, *Fishery Port.* NATIONAL.

★10.10 p.m.: *The King of Spain's Daughter.* (Producer, John Cheatle.) NATIONAL. 8.35 p.m.: Variety from Radiolympia. REGIONAL.

Monday, Sept. 7th, 8.0 p.m.: *Love at Par.* (Mabel Constanduros and Peter Haddon.) NATIONAL. 8.0 p.m.: Wagner Promenade Concert. REGIONAL.

Tuesday, Sept. 8th, 8.55 p.m.: Feature Programme, *The Woman's Movement.* (M. Allen.) REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Sept. 9th, 1.0 p.m.: Seventeenth Century Contemporaries, Handel and Purcell. NATIONAL. 8.45 p.m.: Variety Feature. REGIONAL.

★Thursday, Sept. 10th, 8.0 p.m.: Sibelius Promenade Concert. NATIONAL. 8.0 p.m.: *Evergreens of Jazz.* (George Scott.) REGIONAL.

Monday, Sept. 14th, 8.30 p.m.: Variety, *Three Musketeers.* REGIONAL.

Tuesday, Sept. 15th, 2.0 p.m.: Opening of Johannesburg Exhibition. NATIONAL.

★8.10 p.m.: *The Black Eye.* (Bridie.) NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Sept. 16th, 8.0 p.m.: Handel and Bach Promenade Concert. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Sept. 19th, 8.30 p.m.: Music Hall. NATIONAL.

★Sunday, Sept. 20th, 9.0 p.m.: Intercontinental Feature from America. REGIONAL.

Monday, Sept. 21st, 10.30 p.m.: Commentary on International 6-day Cycle Race, Wembley. NATIONAL.

★8.0 p.m.: *The Calendar.* Edgar Wallace. (Producer, Gielgud.) REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Sept. 23rd, 8.0 p.m.: *Patricia Brent, Spinster.* Herbert Jenkins. (Producer, Max Kester.) REGIONAL. 9.0 p.m.: Feature Programme, *Dirleton Castle.* REGIONAL.

Thursday, Sept. 24th, 8.0 p.m.: Medtner and Mussorgsky Promenade Concert. NATIONAL.

★9.20 p.m.: Talk by B.B.C. Controller of Programmes. (C. G. Graves.) NATIONAL.

Friday, Sept. 25th, 10.10 p.m.: Feature Programme: *The Fishing Industry.* NATIONAL.

Saturday, Sept. 26th, 8.30 p.m.: Variety. NATIONAL. 9.5 p.m.: Discussion, *That Women and Children should not be saved first.* REGIONAL.

★Monday, Sept. 28th, 9.0 p.m.: Feature Programme, *Television.* NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Sept. 29th, 8.0 p.m.: Mozart-Haydn Promenade Concert. NATIONAL. 9.15 p.m.: Recorded Feature, *Election of Lord Mayor of London.* REGIONAL.

★Wednesday, Sept. 30th, 8.0 p.m.: *Sailors of Cattaro.* Wolff. (Producer, Barbara Burnham.) NATIONAL. 8.25 p.m.: Bach Promenade Concert. REGIONAL.

Hollywood Manufactures Snow

By H. CHEVALIER

HOLLYWOOD'S LATEST technical triumph is a machine for producing real snow. It has been used for the past three months on a huge "refrigerated" set for Republic's *Hearts in Bondage*.

To manufacture the snow three-hundred-pound blocks of ice are crushed and fed by conveyor to a special aerated blower. Particles of pulverised ice are forced through a flexible nozzle and the result is a snowstorm.

It was first of all necessary to erect a special building convertible into a sound stage, the walls of which were insulated with 14 inches of heat resistant material. Incidentally this material proved to have sound absorbent qualities, but minor difficulties from an acoustical point of view appeared when the interior finish of hard pine was found to reverberate to the slightest noise. This was finally overcome by the use of ozite hung on the walls and distributed in sections along the ceiling a few feet below the main refrigerating coil.

Frozen ice ponds in their normal wintry conditions had to be created and here the problem was to obtain a correct sound rendering of the slithering of skates upon ice. Floor noise tended to interfere, until a solution was found in flooding layers of pre-cooled water directly on top of a layer of acoustical material. The water was allowed to freeze in the temperature of the stage and a smooth ice surface was the result.

These, however, were minor difficulties compared with the problem of the enormous heat given out by the studio lamps. The scenes to be shot necessitated the use of 40 to 50 lamps with a total lighting load of 200 kilowatts.

One kilowatt of electricity generates a heat content of 3,240 British thermal units per hour and it was reckoned that 57 tons of ice per hour would be necessary to absorb the heat of the lamps. To this it was necessary to add the amount of heat given off by a crew and cast of 100 people.

Another serious factor was the necessity for removing the gases from the arc lamps and the vitiated air and replacing with pre-cooled air. A pre-cooling "bunker" system was installed. It consists of about 6,000 feet of two-inch ammonia piping and an additional four miles of piping for the ceiling of the stage. The fresh air is drawn over the whole of this system by a 25,000 cubic feet per minute pressure-blower which in turn delivers the air under a pressure of one ounce into the stage. Foul air is expelled through a suitable hatch controlled by an elaborate counter-weight system. Recirculation fans are able to lower the temperature to zero if required, and under these conditions the actors' breath is visible and the maintenance of sets of real ice and snow made possible for an indefinite period.

The usual misty haze caused by lamp rays directly striking the ice surface is completely eliminated by the air circulation system.

International Competition for Amateurs

The Institute of Amateur Cinematographers organises annually an International Competition. This year's competition closes on September 30th, and entries are invited from all countries, from members and non-members. The list of awards includes :

1. I.A.C. International Silver Challenge Trophy. To be awarded for the most outstanding work by an individual in any film entered, whether made by individual or club.

2. Home Movies Silver Challenge Trophy. To be awarded to an entry in Class 1 (Educational—Industrial or Scientific Processes).

3. Wallace Heaton Trophy. To be awarded in Class 2 (Educational—Natural History).

4. *Amateur Cine World* Plaques (9.5 mm., 16 mm. and 8 mm.). To be awarded in Class 3 (Narrative—General).

5. The Lizars Trophy. To be awarded to an entry in any Class having been made entirely in Scotland.

6. Sheffield Photo Co. Cup for Colour. To be awarded in Class 7 (Colour—any subject—or treatment—Educational, Narrative, Dramatic).

7. American Society of Cinematographers' Gold Medal. To be awarded for Photographic Merit.

8. *Daily Mail* International Silver Challenge Trophy. To be awarded to the maker of the most outstanding film production entered in the competition.

9. London Film Production's Gold Cup. To be awarded to the makers of the most outstanding club production.

10. I.A.C. Silver Medal of Merit.

11. I.A.C. Bronze Medal of Merit.

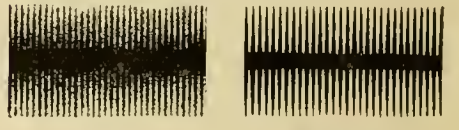
12. Numerous equipment prizes presented by Registered Associate Dealers.

Ultra-Violet Recording Gives Clearer Results

Photography plays an essential part in sound recording. Sound waves are turned electrically into fluctuations of a beam of light, which either oscillates (variable area) or varies in intensity (variable density) according to the system used. These fluctuations of light are reproduced photographically on film. The electrical system is far advanced towards perfection, and now attention is being turned to improving the technique of photographing the light beam.

To date, two factors have militated against the successful photographic reproductions of sounds of all pitches. First, the colour of the light beam has been white. As is well known, white light is made up of a variety of coloured lights mixed together. Each of these coloured components of white light has a different focal length. This means that no lens can bring them all into focus at the same point on the film, and the image is slightly blurred. If the light beam could be made up of a single colour instead of white, such blurring could be reduced.

Secondly, white light affects the emulsion



ordinary ultra-violet

around the point where it strikes ('halation'), penetrates through the emulsion, reaches the film base and is reflected back. These things again cause blurring. Such blurring of the photographic image has bad effects, particularly in the recording of high-pitched voices or sounds. It is notoriously difficult to record an "S" sound.

R.C.A. Photophone have turned their attention to improving these points. They have developed a new light system using a beam of ultra-violet light invisible to the eye. By this means, not only can the light beam be accurately focused, but in addition ultra-violet light cuts down halation. The new sound track, it is claimed, is cleaner and clearer, and the range of recording has been greatly improved.

It seems likely that you will now be able to hear the voices of your favourite stars reproduced more accurately and that the voices of many attractive personalities, debarred from the screen by difficulties implicit in recording their voices, will now be presented. The advantages in the recording of orchestral music are of course considerable. Kurt Weill, the composer, is an enthusiastic champion of the ultra-violet method. A. E.

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Newsreel lacks Drama, says editor of *Daily Sketch*

RADIO FANS continually criticise the B.B.C. Fifty per cent of newspaper readers think they could edit a newspaper better than the editor—and do not hesitate to tell him so. Cinema fans pounce on the demerits of much-boomed stars and over-boosted productions.

There are millions of newsreel fans, but they are slow to criticise the newsreel. They are terrified into submission by the false shibboleth that the camera cannot lie, whereas by sins of omission and commission it may be as expert an Ananias as the printed word.

But you can't invent news, they say . . .

Hence this interview, bringing with it that rarity—constructive criticism.

It comes from one who, although outside the film world, is particularly well qualified to give it —the editor of a great picture newspaper.

A. W. F. Sinclair

So, amid the whirr of tape machines, the shouts of "Copy, Boy!" the distant swearing of 'subs,' the drumming of reporters' heels on table tops, I found my way to the office of the editor of the *Daily Sketch*.

As I stood hesitating, a young man in a hurry surprised me by pushing open the door without knocking.

I stood back politely. After all, one never knows how powerful these young private secretaries may be.

He looked at me enquiringly. "Did you want to see me?"

I shook my head. "It's the editor I want."

"I am the editor," said the young man in a hurry—Mr. A. W. F. Sinclair, editor of the *Daily Sketch*. "Come in."

And so, every now and then rolling an editorial cigar between his fingers, every now and then rolling an undefiled Scottish "r" from his lips, he talked of films. . . .

"You mustn't think of the newsreel as a rival to the newspaper," he said, "because, as a matter of fact, one helps the other.

"Not only does the newsreel make the public more picture-minded, but its brief flashes of world events set people thinking—and so reading —about them.

"The paper gives its reader up-to-the-minute news and pictures, and then he goes to the cinema to see what he has read about in animated form.

"You can," went on Mr. Sinclair, "really speak of radio, newspaper and newsreel as a triumvirate of technology. The newspaper reflects life, the radio gives it atmosphere, and the newsreel gives it animation.

"But the newsreel doesn't always fulfil its function properly. You've seen a puppet-show. That has animation, but has it life?"

The editorial cigar waved a negative circle.

"What the newsreel needs is dramatising—getting that human interest that it lacks at present.

"After all, one launching is very like another, one football match 'long shot' almost indistinguishable from the next.

"And so, not only is one newsreel like its rival, it is so often a replica of any other week's issue.

"But now, suppose the newsreel editor told his cameraman to go out and get the picture *behind* the big event.

"Suppose, instead of that long shot of the Cup Final that means so little there were a flash of the man who wasn't chosen to play . . . suppose to follow that 'pretty' wedding picture we saw the woman who, lovingly, dressed the bride . . . or those two little pages who after weeks of rehearsal by doting mothers got left behind. . . ."

"Puir wee bairns," I murmured artfully.

". . . and were found sucking ice creams in a corner," finished Mr. Sinclair sternly.

There were almost tears in my eyes—from the editorial cigar smoke.

"The sort of picture the *Daily Sketch* would get," I said.

He nodded. "There's always someone left out of the big story," said Mr. Sinclair. "I believe the trouble is that newsreels are taken, and then edited—well edited, I should add . . ." he noted my gasp appreciatively, and then went on ". . . and newspaper pictures are edited before they're taken. The paper doesn't send out its cameramen to take the big event, it sends them out with specific angles of that event in mind."

"To reflect life," I said.

"You know," went on Mr. Sinclair, "the public for newsreels is tremendous. They go from one news theatre to another . . . in a sort of newsreel pub-crawl.

"And that in spite of the lack of individuality in the films or the programmes, the lack of that personality that the reporter, or the re-write man, gets into the story."

The cigar smoke formed a large query in the air, anticipating my own.

He waved it away.

"So you'll see longer programmes at the news theatres very soon," he prophesied. "Instead of an hour, there'll be two or perhaps three-hour programmes, just of news and interest films.

"At the present time one great fault is that the programmes are built so much for men.

"Where's your woman interest that the newspaper caters for so successfully? Where are your newsreel pictures of women—for women?

"Fashions——" he took the word from my mouth—"yes, you see a few mannequins sometimes in a screen magazine, wearing freak fashions that 99 women in a hundred could neither afford nor ever wish to wear.

"The newsreels, and the news theatre programmes, need humour, too," went on Mr. Sinclair. "Humour, not only in commentary, but in treatment, but it's a very difficult thing to get.

"Brightness is a horrible word, but that describes the sort of thing that's wanted, as opposed to 'being funny.' "

I thought of those very B.B.C. commentators, and agreed.

Newsreel theatre programmes need better balancing, Mr. Sinclair thinks. Beyond the cartoons there is too little that is light.

Of those he has no criticisms to make.

"Did you see Cock Robin?" he asked me. "A sociological satire."

"But that's beside the point. And when the newsreel gets over the growing-pains of its adolescence——"

The page-proofs of to-morrow's news began to come in. I said good-bye quickly.

Mr. A. W. F. Sinclair had once again become the young man in a hurry. . . .

DENIS MYERS

NEWSREELS ANALYSIS—JULY

There are five Newsreels circulating in British cinemas and a check-up of contents for July—summarised in the following table—reveals that all of them devote approximately 50 per cent to the three stock subjects—Sport, Royalty and Military.

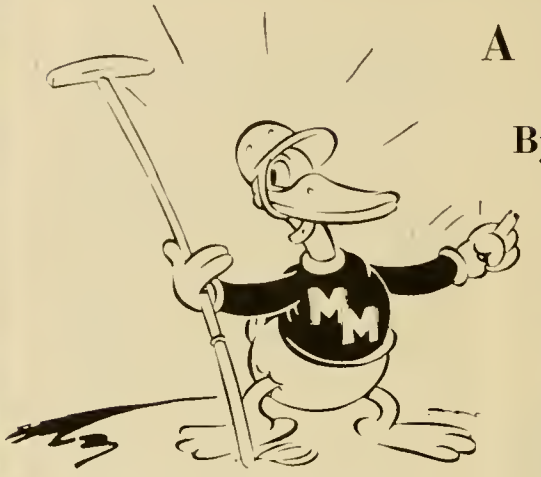
Despite the increasing popularity of the Newsreels, a survey of contents reveals the extremely limited range of the material covered. While speed and efficiency of service to exhibitors have improved amazingly—big events are covered with a quickness reminiscent of Fleet Street methods —it is not possible to say that there has been a corresponding improvement in the range and variety of news presented.

NEWSREEL	Total Number of Items spotted by *W.F.N.*	SPORT	ROYALTY	MILITARY, etc.	FOREIGN	EMPIRE
British Movietone News	88	28	9	4	17	6
British Paramount News	49	11	8	2	7	4
Gaumont-British News	61	22	8	4	14	2
Pathé Gazette	25	12	7	—	1	—
Universal Talking News	85	21	11	9	7	1
TOTALS	308	94	43	19	46	13

Donald Duck and Hitler—

A RESEMBLANCE?

By RONALD C. MOODY



Ronald C. Moody, the writer of this article, is a native of Jamaica and has been a sculptor in England for some years. In addition to portraits, he has been responsible for more abstract work in wood-carving. The latter reveals a strange contrast to prevailing tendencies in its inclination towards Egyptian and Chinese style. Although Disney students may not agree with several of Moody's ideas, his study of the well-known characters suggests a new basis for criticism.

History records that when man first wished to write, he did so by means of a series of pictures. A form of picture writing has always seemed to me the most suitable means of expression for the flat celluloid screen. Towards the end of the war, a kind of "animated" picture writing appeared in *Mutt and Jeff*—comical, human figures, whose antics made only satirical comment on contemporary manners—really an adaptation from the "funny" page of an American magazine. As writing evolved, lines became symbols of objects. On the screen, picture writing has now reached this stage. In my opinion, the most intelligible "writer" is Walt Disney.

Disney's animals are symbols of man—common man. He is not merely a satirical commentator, but a philosopher with a strong moral trait, showing that change of environment has caused man to take on a different colouring, without effecting any fundamental alteration.

There have always been Donald Ducks. In our language there are such phrases as "one-track mind," "narrow point of view," "limited mind," a few of the many epithets worthy of Donald. He is the wild-eyed man one sees carrying a banner in Hyde Park which bids you "Beware of your sins and repent before it is too late," He is the author whose too-often returned manuscripts cause him to inveigh against publishers who do not seem to appreciate his peculiar genius. Donald is always a man with a grievance. In *The Band Concert*, his silly hornpipe tune he accounts of more importance than the most popular of classical overtures. So great is his belief in himself that he is able to disorganise a large orchestra; and, even after the subsequent whirlwind and accompanying hair-raising experiences, he returns to earth still playing his tune. It is this belief in himself, together with his grievance, which enables him to influence not only his few long-suffering friends, but, in some circumstances, to bend a nation to his will. In this form we see him in Hitler, inveighing against the Jews whom he sees as unspeakable monsters; in Mussolini, willing to send to their death thousands of his fellow-men, of whom Mickey is a symbol. History is full of examples of powerful Donald Ducks who have brought untold misery on their fellow-men; but the less harmful ones, who can be found in every walk of life, are endured with good-natured tolerance or indifference.

Mickey represents the man-in-the-street, his loves, hates and vanities. However changed his environment, he always remains the same, confident of his survival, He is the good citizen. His dearest friend, the well-meaning, admiring but obtuse Pluto, is symbolic of "the best friend." He is so helpful that he only succeeds in becoming an obstacle. In doing what he thinks best for Mickey he leads him into the most uncomfortable situations. He is the kind of human being who, having neither initiative nor imagination, dedicates himself without reserve to someone who he thinks possesses all the qualities he most admires. Pluto's love for Mickey is not without its mean aspect. Suddenly smitten by a coy, empty-headed, "gold-digging" little minx, he substitutes bones for chocolates which Mickey had bought to help him in his wooing of Minny, with disastrous results. Give Pluto a grievance, and soon his bark would take on the relentless persistency and monotony of a Donald Duck.

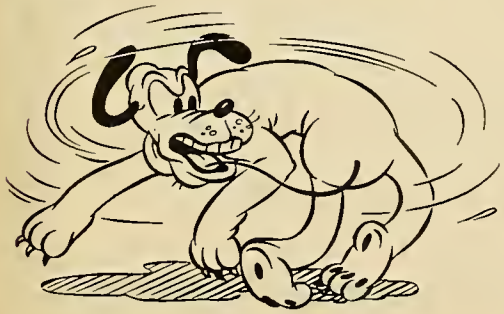
Mickey's "girl friend," Minny, I do not find of great interest. She is the empty-headed flapper, who has cultivated all the tricks necessary to keep her man: indeed, the perfect companion for Mickey in his lighter moments. It is really Clara Cluck whom I find the most interesting of Disney's female creations. With what pride she heralds the laying of her super-egg. Nothing less would have been good enough! With what tender jealous care she watches over her brood! How superb she is as the world-famous coloratura

SZEGEDI SZUTS
the man they miss

soprano! We have often seen her on the concert platform and in the Opera House.

In his modern fairy tales, Disney, the philosopher, is more apparent. Carlyle thundered, "Work is man's salvation." Many a pulpit has urged, "As you sow, so shall you reap." With what amusement and wit "writes" Disney about these sayings in *The Grasshopper and the Ants*. Sloth is represented by the grasshopper and industry by the ants. Accompanied by his fiddle, the grasshopper throughout the summer sings in his inimitable voice that the world owes him a living, disregarding the warning of the Queen of the Ants and the example of her subjects, who spend their time diligently providing for the winter. Suddenly he is forcibly reminded of the season of the year by the biting cold winds. Homeless and blue with cold, he eventually arrives at the house of the ants to be greeted with sounds of revelry from within. He is given a warm welcome which includes food and a mustard-bath. He is thoroughly enjoying himself when the Queen arrives. In a shaking voice punctuated by sneezes he begs her to let him remain. She graciously grants him his wish on the condition that he conforms to the law of the kingdom, which is that no one shall eat who does not work. He is, therefore, commanded to play on his fiddle, and with a contrite heart he sings "I owe the world a living."

It is Disney's subtle use of colour combined with his unerring musical and dramatic sense which helps to give to his cartoons a form proper to the screen. *The Three Little Pigs* is another excellent example of this. There have been many imitators, but no one can ape the artistic sensibility of another; so Disney still remains unexcelled.



MR. ISTVAN SZEGEDI SZUTS, the gifted Hungarian artist who is at present staying in London, is perhaps unique among film-cartoonists in having designed and carried out cartoons singlehanded. One of these films was shown by the Film Society, and at the Academy Theatre.

Here are some of his views on the cartoon industry:

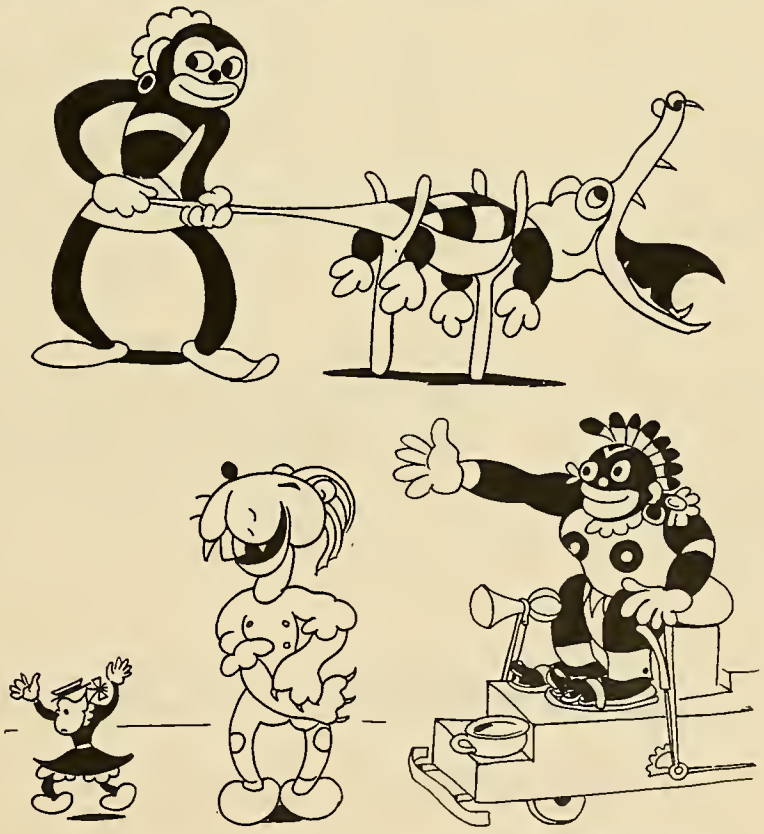
"Europe should make her own cartoons; and, obviously London is the place in which to produce them. Many European studios have attempted this branch of the film industry, but have failed owing to lack of special organisation and the proper equipment for such productions. This work is more complicated and highly-specialised than any other kind of film-work; and without the necessary equipment it is hopeless to attempt to compete with the present universal distribution of the American product.

"Our big film companies have never considered the problem seriously although they are in a position strong enough to force the distribution-market. Unfortunately, they are not sufficiently interested in 'short' films (under which heading cartoons are erroneously placed) since their attention is satisfactorily occupied in the making of big films.

"America has shown us, however, what a very profitable business it can be. In these times of unemployment, it is a thousand pities that we should look on with folded arms whilst great sums of European money flow unceasingly into the American cartoon-industry. If we only had sense enough to build up our own industry, that money would remain here and multiply. We have everything that is needed. We are particularly rich in ingenious brains that are alive to present-day European tastes and tendencies; several of these America has already been far-seeing enough to commandeer. For this reason, and on account of her superiority in technical matters, she is far ahead of us.

"The domination of Disney would seem to last for ever; this is because, so far, he stands alone. As soon as Europe realises the tremendous possibilities of cartoon development, the American product will be, along with Blériot's monoplane, relegated to the museum. Disney's advantage is only the advantage of money and organisation; and in both respects, England holds the leading place among the nations of the world.

"The day of red-tape and long-drawn-out deliberation is at an end; now is the time for decisive action. With such a lucrative field of industry, it is imperative to arrest the present financial drain on Europe, and to meet the adroit and unassailable American spirit on its own ground."



Sketches from Szegedi's notebook

COVER TO COVER

(PREFACE TO LIFE.)

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the film about books and literature, produced by Paul Rotha and directed by Alexander Shaw; starring W. Somerset Maugham, A. P. Herbert, 'Sapper', Rebecca West, Julian Huxley and T. S. Eliot; with narration by Ion Swinley, Leslie Mitchell and Lydia Sherwood; with Music by Raymond Bennell; Verse by Winifred Holmes and Photography by George Noble.

Specially chosen by the B.B.C. for the first Television Broadcast to the Public at Radiolympia.

THE STRAND FILM COMPANY LTD.

37-39 Oxford Street. London W.1.

Bruce Woolfe Reports—

Eugenics, Marine, P.T.I. Subjects in Production

The production programme of a minimum number of fifty reels and a summer like 1936, causes the producer some bad moments. It means, of course, the alteration of schedules and even subjects at the last moment. A programme of twelve biological subjects, six Ecological subjects and a number of Geography films means a great deal of exterior work. Fortunately, we have been able to change our scripts in various directions so that a good deal of the material which should have been shot outdoors could be brought up into the studio where we could, at least, rely upon shooting it when ready. Again, we were fortunate in having planned a certain number of Marine subjects which we hope to be able to complete inside the Research Laboratory, so saving the disappointments of outdoor work.

Dr. Julian S. Huxley has drawn us up an elaborate programme for this year, which includes such diverse subjects as *Eugenics* and the *Life Story of Hydra*. The latter has been completed by Percy Smith, who has secured one or two remarkable shots. It is hoped to complete the film of the *Sea Urchin* during the present season; it will be remembered that this subject was successful last year at the Brussels Exhibition, but that particular part of the film was only the first half, the development of the larva being taken in hand this year.

A large quantity of material has been received from Frank Bundy, who is at present touring the West Indies on behalf of G.B. Instructional, Ltd. He has secured what look like being a really first-class film of the Sponge industry. He has penetrated into the Mahogany forests of British Honduras, a country that is very little known. Bundy is working in conjunction with geographical experts, and it is hoped that his work will be of real value in the addition of little known subjects to the educational film library.

Frank Goodliffe is at present engaged in a series of films dealing with health and beauty. These subjects are designed to follow on the series of Physical Education films already made for children. They are intended for adults, and will demonstrate how the ordinary town-dweller by judicious use of the proper exercises can keep fit and healthy.

Donald Carter has just completed a series of instructional films on Swimming. We were fortunately able to secure the services of the Olympic Team before their departure for Berlin. Included also in this series is a demonstration on diving by Mr. Pete Desjardins, the world's champion diver.

Further additions have been made of Physical Education films which now complete the series illustrating the whole of the Board of Education syllabus.

Twelve more *Secrets of Life*, prepared by Mary Field, have been handed over to G.B. Distributors for release in the Autumn. Mary Field is at present away in the west country engaged on a series of regional geography subjects dealing with the life and activities of various types of workers in that region. These subjects have been found to be of particular value to Geographers.

In the immediate future there will be put in hand a film showing the development of Hospitals during the last century. The King Edward Hospital Fund for London are collaborating in this subject, the script for which has been written by Mary Field.

A further documentary film being made in collaboration with the Air Ministry and the War Office, shows the defences of the country against attack by enemy aircraft.

It is expected that all these subjects will be completed early in the New Year.

Pills, Dog-powders and Shampoos

The Beecham Group has made plans for a five-figure programme to cover a number of products. The principal ones will be Beecham's Pills, Amami Shampoos and Sherley's Dog Powders. *Love My Dog* will be the title of the last. *Jacqueline Grafton, the four-year-old film star, who resembles Shirley Temple, will fall into the Thames and will be rescued by The Dog.* Further details of the plot are not available, but the film will be made by the Garrick Film Company, produced by Devonport Hackney and supervised by Paul Stein.

The main film of the programme will be *Here's Health.* This is being produced by Publicity Films on a scenario written by Sydney Box. Ralph Smart, the director, will be assisted by a strong cast and a large chorus. The Amami film will be called *Crowning Glory*, and the producers are Gaumont-British Screen Services. Andrew Buchanan of the Gaumont-British Screen Magazine, writes and directs the picture.

News Review

Ford Motor Co. reported to be building own £1,000,000 studios in Detroit to make films dealing with motor industry.

* * *

National Milk Publicity Council's travelling cinema has completed a 13-week tour.

* * *

British building industry considering idea of public relations film. R.I.B.A. building at Portland Place already filmed.

* * *

Red Sails, directed by Ronald Haines for British Documentary Films, presents case for Cornish fishermen.

* * *

Gaumont-British have produced for International Combustion, Ltd., of Aldwych House, W.C.2, a propaganda film, showing the normal working of the company's factory.

A large contract for machinery for gold mining in South Africa is followed through the machine shops, each process being meticulously filmed.

Engineering authorities stated, after a private view of the film, that it "demonstrated that British manufacturing methods are not so much out of date as is generally imagined."

* * *

Four new Austin Motor Company publicity films were recently shown to dealers and the Press at Longbridge, Birmingham. All four were produced at the Merton Park Studios.

Welcoming the dealers, Lord Austin said: "Films have been a strong feature of our publicity campaign during the past few years and have proved themselves a major selling force."

Silent and Certain takes us through the life-history of the synchromesh gear box. The use of two commentators and a conversational commentary add a great deal to the interest of the film.

Former Austin programmes have been noteworthy for their travel pictures, and this year's films include *Land of the Mountain and the Flood*, a travel feature bringing to the screen the rugged grandeur and beauty of the Western Highlands of Scotland and also *Cornwall Calling*.

The fourth film shown was *The Pace that Thrills*, a breath-taking picture of newsreel character, showing the achievements of the Austin Seven O.H.V. Specials on road and track.

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"*Party Dish.*" Direction: Elton

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"*Roof Tops.*" Direction: Keene & Burnford

"*Cover to Cover.*" Direction: Shaw

STRAND FILMS

"*Vanishing Sails.*" Direction: Ronald Steuart

"*Vanishing Sails*"

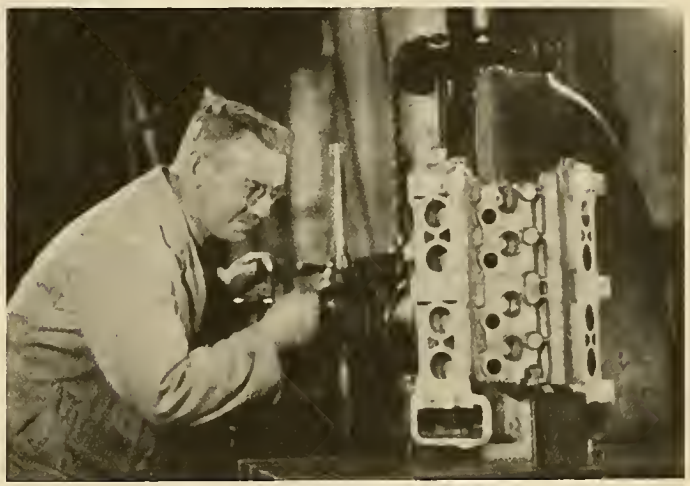
STEUART FILMS

"*Rock Pools.*" Direction: Mary Field

"*Mediæval Village.*" Direction: Holmes

GAUMONT-BRITISH INSTRUCTIONAL

"*Woven Blossoms*" (Irish Linen). Direction: John Alderson



"*The Pace that Thrills*" (for Austin Motors)

PUBLICITY FILMS

"*The Saving of Bill Blewitt.*" Direction: Watt

"*The Fairy of the 'Phone.*" Direction: Coldstream

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WE BELIEVE that World FILM News represents the interests of all people who have a progressive interest in Films, Broadcasting, and Television. We believe that no person with progressive instincts can afford not to read this paper every month.

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● The September number centres on India, where native culture faces British repression. The issue was prepared with the help of Indian national organisations. Other features include MAXIM GORKI on London, Alan D. Bush on Workers' Music.

Film in School—A Dialogue

By RUSSELL FERGUSON

YOUNG MAN: Will the film become an instrument of education?

OLD MAN: I do not think so. I am prophesying rather from a knowledge of what the school is than from dreams of what it might be. The school has no books except the text books used in teaching the subjects prescribed. If the authorities have not had the wit to provide the school with a reference library of books, how can we hope to persuade them to provide a reference library of films?

Y. M.: I grant that the school has no reference library of books. But many schools have circulating libraries of fiction.

O. M.: A few of them have circulating libraries provided by the pupils and chosen by the staff. But the official authorities are content to prescribe one work of fiction per pupil per year. I think that the utmost we can hope for is that some day the authorities may do as much with films, and see to it that each pupil sees one film per year for five years. If the authorities do not provide the pupils with book-fiction, how can we hope that they will provide film-fiction? Some schools have a magic lantern, usually without slides, and a gramophone, usually with about six records. The great majority have none, because such things are not part of the official equipment of any school. How can we expect authorities who missed the possibilities of the lantern and the gramophone, yes, and even the still photograph, to pay any attention to the cinema?

Y. M.: But surely things can't be as bad as that?

O. M.: Things are a great deal worse. The authorities have not merely failed to provide these necessities. They have never awakened to the fact that they *are* necessities.

Y. M.: But surely it is so obvious? The library, the photograph, the gramophone, the film, these are windows upon the world. Upon them we depend for almost all our knowledge of what things are, what they look like, how they sound. Surely educators have realised that we must really try to prepare our children for life by enlarging their experience, by showing them things, by telling them about the world before they enter it?

O. M.: They have realised no such thing.

Y. M.: Then how, in goodness' name, do they spend their time?

O. M.: Mainly in teaching technical subjects —language and mathematics and branches of them, for the most part.

Y. M.: And what about English?

O. M.: English at school is a technical subject. One third of it is History and Geography. The rest is Grammar and Figures of Rhetoric, and History of Literature. I grant that an English teacher can do more legitimate digressing and more real educating than most others, but he has a full programme of technicalities, without going off the beaten track to make more work.

Y. M.: But don't the children get physical training and art and crafts?

O. M.: Yes—about one-tenth of their time is devoted to this, to their great delight. But, in relation to the long hours spent on academic subjects, it doesn't amount to much.

Y. M.: Why so much technical study?

O. M.: For two main reasons: one, the teachers only know technical subjects, and the other, the Universities prescribe them for their entrance examination, which nearly every parent hopes his child will pass.

Y. M.: And why do the Universities prescribe them?

O. M.: Because the professors don't know any others. They are but teachers of a larger growth.

Y. M.: And do you mean that the schools are so busy with purely technical education that they have no time for general education—preparation for life?

O. M.: I mean that.

Y. M.: But surely this technical education is itself a preparation for life?

O. M.: So it is, in a kind of a way, for the three per cent who assimilate it. For the other ninety-seven per cent it is worse than useless, for it makes failures of them by keeping them for years at work for which they have no aptitude. From the actuarial point of view, secondary education is almost a complete failure.

Y. M.: Do you tell me that the schools fail to teach French and Maths, for instance?

O. M.: Yes, I mean that. Ask any headmaster how many pupils he has each year in first year French. Say, two hundred. Ask him how many will complete the course by scoring half-marks in a French exam. five years later. Say, twenty. Of the successful twenty, find out how many a year later can read a bit of French prose. About half-a-dozen. Only three per cent. This is failure, isn't it?

Y. M.: I suppose so. And yet between times most of our teachers digressed and gave us a good deal of general knowledge.

O. M.: If you just reflect: compare the time they spent in general topics with the time they spent on verbs and equations; compare the amount of general knowledge one ought to have with the amount you were given at school, and then tell me, is it not true that the schools are too busy failing to teach technical subjects to have time for real education?

Y. M.: But will authorities not wake up to the state of affairs?

O. M.: Why should they? Who is complaining? Not the pupils, for they have no voice. Not the parents, who think that their children *ought* to be able to learn mathematics and language. Not the inspectors, who are all recruited from the mandarin class. The Government has no ideas on the subject, the press is indifferent and the Education Authorities are too busy with buildings and teachers to bother about what is taught in the one way by the other. Education proper is nobody's business.

Y. M.: Well, anyway, don't you think that even in this technical education which is all that is provided, films could be a great help?

O. M.: I believe the film could be very useful. But I have already told you why I think it will not be used. Special films would have to be made, and I don't see anybody going to the trouble and expense of making them. After all, they can be done without. If authorities allow teachers to do without maps, as they very largely do, I don't see much chance of their providing films.

Y. M.: Our education reformers, like Russell and Neill—surely they must have some influence?

O. M.: They make their appeal to a small section of the general public, but they do not influence the great machine of state education in the slightest. State education is a closed system. Machinery for social reform, even for education reform on general lines—hours of study, leaving age, salary scales—does exist, of course, in the parliamentary system. But the thing that matters, the choice of curriculum, is vested entirely in the mandarins. And the curriculum *is* the education provided. And the use of films depends upon the curriculum, which is much too full of French verbs and James II to have any use for the film, or for any other of your "windows upon the world."

Y. M.: Then the case for using films properly in school is a hopeless case, and the cause of education reform is a hopeless cause?

O. M.: I am afraid so.

Y. M.: I am sorry about that.

O. M.: So am I.

Hell Unlimited

Norman MacLaren and Helen Biggar—Glasgow amateurs—have produced an ambitious 16 mm. film running for 30 minutes. Norman MacLaren, known to many amateurs for his *Camera Cocktails*, has taken trick camera work to the limit. In fact, the film is the most ingenious example of its kind that I have yet seen. Unfortunately, form, cutting and content do not come up to scratch. If they had, these two directors would have put themselves at a single step in the forefront of producers, professional or amateur.

Technical virtuosity has submerged everything else. The film seeks to tell the economic truth behind armaments and war. Disdaining titles, debarred from sound, the producers have turned to symbols, and it is often difficult to make out what is intended, so obscure are the metaphors, so slim the underlying logical processes. Not only is the film obscure, but the producers, delighted with their own powers, repeat and repeat and repeat. Every ingenious symbol and every pretty trick appears again and again, often in differing contexts, making one's task of disentangling the ideas even harder. One hopes that the producers will take the film back to the cutting bench and try to make a lucid job out of what is some of the best trick work yet to appear. The use of re-photographed war stills is telling. The cost was about £20.

The film is an object lesson to amateur societies, not only in the possibilities of trick work, but in the terrifying results of lack of self-discipline.

A. E.

DISRUPTION IN THE NORTH

By FORSYTH HARDY

There is news of disruption from the North.

The Scottish film societies have decided to leave the fold of the British Federation.

"As a temporary measure," during this season as least, they will operate independently through the Scottish Federation—in being since 1934 and now to function actively.

An independent booking organisation in London is being established, with Mr. F. S. Fairfax-Jones, of Denning Films, as booking officer, and Mr. Stephen Mitchell, late of the Aberdeen Film Society, as liaison officer.

Behind this move lies disappointment that the Leicester conference did not produce a national plan for film booking; dissatisfaction with the existing organisation of the Federation of British Film Societies, and dismay at the immediate outlook.

But also behind this move lies the hope that it will lead eventually to the emergence of a strong, soundly organised national body—a single authoritative voice to speak for the film society movement in Britain. The breakaway is not intended to be obstructionist and it is hoped that it need not be final.

The movement originated at Leicester, in general irritation at the frittering away of the opportunity presented there for establishing the British Federation soundly. During the subsequent months of confusion, uncertainty and disagreement, it grew steadily until, at a meeting of the Scottish Federation, held in Edinburgh on August 22nd, it was unanimously decided to stand out from the British Federation for a period of a year at any rate and to institute an independent booking agency in London.

Whether to carry on independently in the meantime or to attempt to get some order into the affairs of the British Federation: these were the issues at the Edinburgh meeting. The former was chosen, partly because the latter seemed impossible in the time available before the opening of the new season and partly because it was felt that by taking a definite stand, even though it was temporarily outside of the main movement, the final establishment of a strong, efficient, national organisation would be hastened.

It is announced by the Council of the London Film Society that Miss Mary Brown has now resigned owing to illness. A new secretary has been appointed; name to be announced later. The Council regrets that Miss Brown's prolonged illness has made it difficult to keep up with the demands of the provincial societies for information regarding films. These delays have been unavoidable under the circumstances, and will be remedied as soon as possible.

The Scottish societies affected by the decision are the Film Society of Glasgow, the Edinburgh Film Guild, the Aberdeen Film Society, the Film Society of Ayrshire, the Dundee and St. Andrews Film Society and the Inverness Film Society. The Tyneside Film Society, apparently looking to an ancient division between England and Scotland, hopes to work along with the Scottish Federation, a Tyneside representative having informed the Edinburgh meeting that: "Generally if we can strengthen your hand and share in the benefits of collaboration, we shall willingly do so."

This step ought to benefit the film society movement as a whole. Block booking will be made easier, contacts between renters and film societies ought to be made more smoothly; and new film societies in Scotland will start out with the confidence and assurance that a sound booking arrangement can give. Looking further ahead, one may visualise a strong federation co-operating with the London Film Society in the task of importing foreign films.

It remains to be seen, of course, how the new plan will work out. Scottish film societies are certainly going forward wholeheartedly with it. Should it prove successful, it may well become the basis for a national plan for the future.

At least that is how it appears to one writing in the first flush of optimism after the Edinburgh meeting.

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETIES

CAITHNESS

Production of amateur films is the main activity of the Caithness Film Society. The members have already made a film on Seine-Net Fishing and have in production a *Come to Caithness* picture. During the winter it is proposed to make a film about the work of the District Nurse, which in this district is of a particularly arduous nature owing to the distances travelled and the severe winter climate.

The Secretary announces that keener interest is being exhibited in the production side of the Society's activities than any other and that the "lack of bawbees" has no deterrent effect. During the winter the Caithness enthusiasts will hold exhibitions of special films.

BRADFORD

The Bradford Civic Playhouse proposes to hold cinema shows of specially selected films. There is no intention of competing with the programmes of the city's cinemas and a circular issued by the Playhouse states: "Films of an unusual character rarely seen at the commercial cinemas will be screened at frequent intervals. Programmes will include foreign films, newsreels, documentary and educational pictures."

A Film Society is to be formed amongst members of the Playhouse and it is possible that an amateur production unit will be established.

PORTSMOUTH

A Film Society has been started at Portsmouth under the chairmanship of Councillor F. J. Spickernell. Publicity will be handled by C. Paice.

MANCHESTER and SALFORD

For the first time the Manchester Watch Committee has given permission for regular Sunday film shows and this permission has been given on the application of the Manchester and Salford Workers' Film Society. A condition was made that the films were to be shown to members of the Society only. Admission will be given only on producing a membership ticket.

OXFORD

Oxford is to have a new Film Society which will begin operations in October. Performances will be held in the Scala on alternate Sundays. The subscription for the season will be 17*s.* 6*d.* and enquiries should be addressed to the Organiser, 105 Victoria Road, Oxford.

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Film Society Personalities

Burly, untidy, blackhaired, overcoated, **IVOR MONTAGU** is 32. Younger son of Swaythling family—famous Jewish bankers. Would make good banker himself had he not taken up zoology, table tennis, films and politics. Won medal at age of four, as youngest infant at that time to swim length of bath at Bath Club. Educated Westminster, where he studied zoology at South Kensington. Later studied under Lance Hogben at Royal College of Surgeons. Then King's College, Cambridge. Failed on most exams, but was given B.A. standard for Zoology. Finally took degrees in English and French, two terms before his proper time. Had to stay at Cambridge to prove diligence. Found lectures sent him to sleep, so was permitted to do original research. Forgot original research until last week of last term. Spent last week measuring skulls of beavers to nearest 1/100th of a millimetre. Original research passed as O.K. Took up table tennis because he thought he was good at it—better than anyone else. Found he wasn't, but all the same remains chairman of International Advisory Council of Table Tennis. Went out to look for mice in Caucasus and thence to films. Founded Film Society with Sydney Bernstein, Iris Barry, Angus MacPhail, Adrian Brunel and others. At last moment George Atkinson—film journalist—accused Film Society of digging into well-known Moscow gold. Atkinson had to publish apology and Film Society flourishes. Founded *Brunel and Montagu* who handled all kinds of foreign re-editing jobs. Knackers for the film industry, as Ivor describes them, and known widely as Brunel and Montage. Cut *Lodger*, early Hitchcock silent with only thirty titles—unheard of feat at the time. Made three silents for Rowson in 1929. Best known is *Bluebottles*. Quota just coming in, so Rowson held shorts up until Act passed. Talkies came at same time. Films missed boat. Now Unit Production Manager for Gaumont-British. Sandwiches job in with trips to Moscow, International Table Tennis, translation and many other pursuits. He and another sole members of A.C.T. for two years, in G.B. studio. A.C.T. now booming and Ivor plays important part.

Doesn't like photographs of himself; hence none at top of this screed.

PROFESSOR E. R. DODDS. To listen to his dry, schoolmaster voice, you would not take Dodds for a poet. Face and intonation betray no emotions. Yet once you know he has published a volume of verse, a certain look in his quick eyes and his detached, withdrawn attitude are explained. You sense the fire beneath the disciplined husk. You are not as surprised as you might have been to discover that he is interested in psychic research, nor that he was a conscientious objector.

Educated at Belfast and Oxford, Dodds is 43; was lecturer in Classics at University College, Reading, 1919-24; since then has been Professor of Greek at the University of Birmingham and is now to succeed Sir Gilbert Murray as Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford. He has contributed several scholarly volumes to the literature of classical studies.

As President of the Birmingham Film Society Dodds has taken an active part in the movement. No mere figurehead, he conducts meetings, gives lectures and is a conscientious committeeman. For a considerable time he was chairman of the council of the Federation of British Film Societies. He is a prominent figure at all conferences. It is hoped that his influence at Oxford will lead to a revival of the University film society.

THOROLD DICKINSON, one of the doyens of the Film Society movement, and long connected with the London Film Society, has in his more public life been responsible for the well-being of many A.T.P. films, especially on the cutting bench. He is now an independent producer, and plans an elaborate *Fact and Fantasy*

By courtesy United Artists

series, in which Lotte Reiniger, Len Lye and several others are already involved. By the time this appears he will be on his way to Nigeria on a shooting expedition (cameras rather than guns). In regard to this voyage he has been heard to use the word "Buffalo" but there is a good deal more in it than that. The London Film Society will no doubt miss him, as he has hitherto supervised the technical presentation of their programmes, a job which is not so easy as it may sound.

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETIES

TYNESIDE

The third annual report of the Tyneside Film Society shows that the membership is now 826. Eight Sunday performances and a successful children's matinee were given during the season. Feature films shown came from France, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Russia. The shorts alone have made the society indispensable to any serious student of film; they have been representative of the best experimental and documentary work of the year, no significant movement having been missed.

It is stated that "no film is chosen *primarily* for its 'entertainment' value, but on account of its skill in direction, its cutting, its experimental use of sound, its advanced technique; on the other hand, it may be selected for the quality of its content, its value as a social, artistic or pyschological document; or it may, in the case of an old film, be chosen for its historic interest."

Discussions and lectures have been held throughout the season and two special art exhibitions were organised. The Walt Disney collection of original sketches and drawings was obtained after its London run and attracted an attendance of 1,677. The Society is to be complimented on its initiative in arranging the first exhibition of the work of film art direction. Original designs by Erno Metzner, Andre Andreiev, Vincent Korda and Alfred Junge were displayed in conjunction with stills of the completed sets. Several thousand people attended this exhibition, which was held in the Hatton Art Gallery, Armstrong College.

A questionnaire has been sent to all members asking the following questions relating to the films shown during the season: A. Did you consider this film good of its kind? B. Did you consider it, whether successful or not, worthy of inclusion in a film society programme? C. Would you like to see it again?

LEICESTER

The Leicester Film Society will hold its fifth annual general meeting at Vaughan College on September 19th. Monthly exhibitions for the season will begin on Saturday, October 24th. In addition to important foreign feature films, programmes will include short items of general interest, documentaries, abstracts and cartoons, and it is hoped that illustrated lectures on the cinema will be given by Robert Herring, Film Critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, H. J. Randall Lane, of Vaughan College, and Basil Wright (G.P.O. Film Unit).

During the previous season (1935–1936) six principal performances of major productions were held, covering the best work available in seven separate countries. A large number of shorts, many of them British, were also shown. In addition to the film shows, a Study Group was held with a series of twelve lectures given by L. Cargill, Film Critic of the *Leicester Mercury*, on "How to look at a Film."

Lectures were also given by Ivor Montagu and Richard Southern. The chairman of the Leicester Film Society is H. A. Silverman, and Hon. secretary, E. Irving Richards.

Foreign Films for the Coming Season

By MARIE SETON

Inferior quality of continental productions may set programme problem

It is becoming increasingly difficult for the Film Societies to find new foreign films of any intrinsic value, since the general tendency of the continental film is to imitate Hollywood. Light comedies and operettas are taking precedence over the production of serious story films and documentaries. Well acted melodramas and 'romantic' films of primitive peoples are replacing what was once the avant-garde movement. The following list, compiled at random from the output of different continental studios, represents to a considerable extent the foreign films, available for Film Societies.

Allotria is a Tobis-Europa picture directed by Willy Forst and featuring Renate Muller, Jenny Jugo, Adolf Wohlbruch (hero of *Masquerade*) and Heinz Huhmann, who is a delightful comedian. Here is a sophisticated bedroom comedy of the *change partners* school, which though it is well acted and photographed, is nothing like as good entertainment as Forst's earlier pictures made in Vienna. *Allotria* has greatly disappointed Paris.

Boccaccio, Ufa-Tonfilm with Willy Fritsch, is an expensive, gaudy, but not altogether unamusing operetta in the *Vagabond King* class. Though it has put Herbert Maisch into the forefront of German directors such a picture cannot be given the consideration of Film Societies, nor can it have any appeal to the average English audience since this kind of thing is better done by Paramount and Gaumont-British.

Another Ufa-Tonfilm to be made by a new director, Detlef Sierk, is *The Lost Chord*. Given a credible script Sierk may some day make a good film; as it is he has made the very best of bad material. His cast, which includes Lil Dagover, Theodor Loos, Willy Birgel, Maria Koppenhofer, the child actor Peter Bosse and a young Hungarian actress, Maria von Tasnady, who has a lovely and most unusual face, also do the best that they can. With the exception of Willy Birgel, who is hopelessly miscast as the musician-hero (he is the perfectly tailored villain type), they succeed in making a melodramatic and most improbable story of mother-love, adoption and musical genius almost believable. The best thing in the film is Maria Koppenhofer's superb performance as the perverted and vindictive maid.

Acting also plays a very important part in the success of *Traumulus*, the picture directed by Carl Froelich, which won the 1936 German Government film prize. Though Froelich is in no way furthering film technique, he is preserving the traditions of good German cinema in the midst of an industry organised since the advent of National-Socialism. *Traumulus* is by no means a great film, but it is sincere and has a genuine feeling of the period which it presents: post-war provincial Germany. The film presents (and in a mild way debunks) the old German morality and the liberal humanism of the leading character, Professor Niemeyer (played by Jannings), head master of the royal grammar-school. It is probably as much for this reason as for artistic merits that Froelich was given the government prize; while for his performance Jannings received a silver-framed portrait of Adolf Hitler with his hand-written dedication. *Traumulus* is a difficult film for foreigners to appreciate since the story is so extremely national, though the treatment of it is not particularly nationalistic.

From "Head Hunters of Borneo"

As a document of nationalistic psychology, Leni Riefenstahl's picture of the National-Socialist Party Congress at Nuremburg, entitled *Triumph of Will*, is a most remarkable and historically valuable film. Nothing like it has ever been made before for it presumes to portray a living political leader almost in the guise of a god. This is the sort of film Alexander the Great would have had made had the cinema existed when he conquered Egypt and discovered that he was one of the gods. Actually it is a pity for students of history that the cinema was such a late invention, for many 'great' men would then have got their rightful deserts at the hands of posterity. The outsider can only regard *Triumph of Will* with interested curiosity. Possibly it might convince some people of the triumph of personality, but not of the actual value of a political system because it does not show how the system works.

Triumph of Will is not important as a contribution to cinema, but as a visual and oral record of Hitler and his effect on the mass it is almost indispensable to a study of the man. Though it shows Hitler only through the eyes of passionate disciples, it reveals the whole man, for the camera detects many things which are true even when it is being employed by people dominated by ulterior motives. Perhaps Hitler wishes to be something more than a man, but in reality he is the man-in-the-street magnified a hundredfold, and in that lies his success with the crowd. He is a projection of themselves, and though he can marshal them into battalions, he could not exist independently of them for a single day.

The complete contrast to *Triumph of Will*, which is a film of political ritual, is the Czech film *Earth is Singing*, directed by Kolda and photographed by Professor Plicka who is an authority on folk lore. Here is a 'documentary' which shows the ritual and festivals of old gods of pagan origin who now masquerade in Christian disguises in Czechoslovakia. The manner in which it depicts both the work of the peasants and their strange wild dances and celebrations is extraordinarily beautiful, and it reminds one of Dovzhenko's *Earth*.

Earth is Singing is everything a folk film ought to be; while the Tampico-Film unit of Tobis Rota were just the wrong people to go to Borneo and make a film about the head-hunters. The expedition was under the direction of Baron von Plessen, but however much Baron von Plessen may have studied the natives of Borneo he does not understand them, for he quite suddenly grafts on to them the moral inhibitions of central Europe. *Head Hunters of Borneo* is in the Flaherty tradition, only von Plessen lacks Flaherty's epic conception of man's struggle against nature. He also fails to appreciate primitive people—to him they are merely interesting exponents of mumbo-jumbo. A love story of a European character runs through the film which shows the most savage rituals of the wild men of Borneo; but this love becomes entangled in sentiments and emotions which could never develop in the jungle which the film depicts. The photography is extremely good, and the native actors are excellent until they have to portray emotions which do not at all agree with their natures.

The Emperor of California is another German film which deals with the wilds. It is directed by Luis Trenker who also plays the leading part, the historical figure General Suter. This is the de luxe western on which more than a million marks has been spent, and though there are good sequences in it, on the whole it is very uneven. From the cutting and also from a synopsis of the story it appears that Trenker shot far too much film and then did not know what to do with it. In the first sequence—Suter leaving Germany for California—the continuity is poor, and the editing very old fashioned. But later when Suter is cultivating his land in California, fighting against the gold rush and endeavouring to defeat his enemies, the film becomes fairly exciting, well acted and the camera work is good, particularly in the mirage sequence in the desert. But again at the end the whole story is lost in fade-ins and fade-outs, and no one, unless they had seen the White House at Washington, would know where Suter is breathing his last.

"Emperor of California"

Out of all the documentary and educational films which Germany is making only Walter Ruttmann's *Ships in Danger* has any claim to being included in a Film Society programme. It is the only film which adds anything to the cinema, or can compare with the English documentaries. Though it is only three hundred metres long, it is the only really dramatic film that Germany has made recently, because it is the one picture made with artistic conviction. The camera work is magnificent and the cutting extremely good. Ruttmann shows that the German Lifeboat Service is a real and important organisation because it is doing something for humanity, and not just talking about it. Moreover, it is the only *kultur* film in which the people taking part are allowed to become individuals. Because Ruttmann believes in what he is saying, he has found a way to say it.

De Kribbebijter (The Cross-Patch) is a Dutch comedy film recently shown in London with English titles. It was made at the Amsterdam Holfi studios and is directed by Hermann Kosterlitz and Ernst Winar. The film story was adapted from a well-known stage success in Holland and the subject is similar to "The Taming of the Shrew." Although there is nothing novel in either story or technique and the camera has been used in a straightforward manner, the film has a good deal of entertainment and interest value. The simplicity of the treatment and the fine acting should commend the film to a critical audience.

With the exception of *Traumulus*, *Earth is Singing*, *De Kribbebijter* and *Ships in Danger*, these new films cannot properly be considered as Film Society material. When one considers the quality of many of them, one realises that political fanaticism is excessively bad for the cinema. The decline of Ufa is most remarkable. The decline, most severely felt in the export department, helps to explain the fact that the Berlin Reichfilmkammer recently invited Erich Pommer to return and tidy up the mess that the Ministry of Propaganda has made for everyone connected with the film industry. But apparently Mr. Pommer wisely thinks he can do better work at Denham, and leaves the Reichfilmkammer to get out of their muddle as best they can.

"Traumulus"

NEWS FROM THE FILM SOCIETIES

HEREFORD

The Hereford Film Society presented its first three programmes at the Palladium Theatre, Hereford, during the spring. Performances are at 9.0 p.m. on Wednesdays, at monthly intervals.

As with the Billingham Film Society, the performances are public, and there is no formal membership of the Society. Approximately 450 people attended each of the first three performances, and provided good films can be obtained, the Society is assured of a successful season in 1936–37.

The main films shown at the first performances were *Maskerade*, *Le Million* and *Poil de Carotte*. The officers are B. Bulmer, S. Bankside, Hafor Road, Hereford, Hon. Treasurer, and A. Hudson Davies, 2 Wye Bank, Hereford, Hon. Secretary.

LONDON F.I.S.

The first meeting of the Film Society run jointly by the London Film Institute Film Society and Film Group will be held at the end of September.

Film Group announce that the curriculum for the first year's course in cinematography is now ready. The subscription rates for the whole course, including classes, lectures and special film shows, are Two Guineas per year. Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, Group Theatre Rooms, 9 Great Newport Street.

SOUTHAMPTON

The Southampton Film Society, now entering its sixth Season, gives Sunday afternoon performances to its members. The Society has a branch organisation at Winchester and some 100 people from Winchester regularly attend its performances at Southampton.

Among the films under consideration for showing during the forthcoming season are *Bonne Chance*, *The Student of Prague*, *Marchand d'Amour*, *So Ended a Great Love*, *Unfinished Symphony* (original German version), *Musik im Blut*, *Barcarole*, *B.B.C. The Voice of Britain*, *Nightmail*, and *Under the Water*.

J. S. Fairfax-Jones is hon. general secretary; D. A. Yeoman, 16 Ascupart House, Portswood, Southampton, is the local secretary.

A Scottish Correspondent writes:

"There is no desire to break away from a strong, straight-dealing British federation, but without exception the Scottish societies are thoroughly disgusted with the chaos existing in the south. I am afraid the London Film Society comes out of it all very badly. Instead of being a leading influence in the movement it is a definite stumbling block. It is never frank, never expresses its policy, squirms about not getting support and turns up a snooty nose when it is offered. Its attitude has only one apparent explanation—that it does not welcome a strong federation and will not work with it. Either that or personal rackets are so rampant that the federation is better without London."

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"The purpose of these interminable conferences is to make a good film."—*Mr. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.*

* * *

"Have you ever thought of having a humorous page in *World Film News*?"—*Ewart Hodgson.*

* * *

"I only do it for the money, you know."—*Arthur Treacher.*

* * *

"It is not my playing. That will be uncomfortable, but I have never talked to an audience."—*Paderewski.*

* * *

"No more Astaire-Rogers musicals? Then no more *Films* for me. I shall stay at home and knit."—*Correspondent in Film Weekly.*

WFN SIGNS TOOTS PARAMOUR!

Another Scoop for Cockalorum

The Cockalorum editor is proud to announce that Miss Toots Paramour has agreed to supply him with her exclusive services. Among these is included a special monthly column of tittle-tattle and swill from Wardour Street and the Studios.

Miss Paramour has been exceedingly intimately connected with the Trade for many years, and her information from the highways and byways of the film world will, we are sure, fill our readers with emotions of the most indescribable nature.

Exclusive portrait of Toots Paramour returning from a special interview

TOOTS PARAMOUR CALLING

First of all, shake a hand with the newest recruit to the Superblistertone set. . . . Meet Jaroslav ("Edgefog") Spinachowitz, highest-paid fourth-assistant-cameraman in the world.

. . . He's come all the way from Poland to assist Maggi Maggi, the ravishing Italian photo-maestro, to shoot Superblistertone's latest thriller *Smack It Again.*

Jaro (as I playfully call him) has just arrived in England. "I bring, too, my muzzer," he says. . . And that's goody goody for us—because Ma Spinachowitz was for years the champion clout-caster of Przymsl, and will now be continuity girl on *The Private Life of Emmanuel Kant.*

"I bring too my dotters," continues Jaro. . . . Goody goody again, boys and girls, because those eight pretty lassies are going to learn English and do a smashing song-and-dance act in *The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna.*

Now hang on for the big stuff. . . . Guggenheim McAndrew of Superblistertone tells me that he hopes also to sign up Jaroslav's brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, mothers-in-law, and especially his great-grandmother, who as every granfan knows was Teheran's Own Prize Granny for six years in succession. . . . But that's not quite fixed yet. . . . Granny Spinachowitz insists on a starring part or nothing, while Guggy swears she's the ideal for second lead to Gloria Musquash in *Snake in the Grass.* . . . Well, good luck to them all, says your Toots. . . .

* * *

At crack o' dawn the other day I packed up my nightie and bumbled off to the Bullseye Studios at Worplesdon.

Oh my! What doings! . . . There was Bullseye's ace-director Juju Strumpf eating pumpernickel on the top of a huge chromium-plated tower overlooking the big finale set of *Solitude*, and cursing like the fine old trouper he is. . . .

As I wandered among the 80,000 artificial magnolia trees which had sprung up on the floor overnight I bumped into Archie Von Splitz, Bullseye's casting director. . . . And did he tell the tale. . . ?

. . . Seems that Strumpf wanted 10,000 extras for the scene, and there was poor Archie trying to find 10,000 foreigners out of work. . . . No good, of course, so the poor lad had to fall back on a crowd of British actors and actresses!!! . . . Was his face red . . . ?

. . . At any rate, there they all were, hanging from the magnolias disguised as bunches of grapes, while the pageant of Cuban Cuties thru the Ages passed in front of the critical eyes of Strumpf and his assistants.

. . . It's a big scene, this finale of *Solitude*—and if you've read the book, you'll know it's been pushed into the story willy-nilly . . . but what of that?

George Flapp, idolised gurgling baritone, plays hero opposite Maisie McMudd. Maisie, you remember, made film history by wearing a dress of real peach-rinds in *Pride and Prejudice.*

SHORT SNIPS . . . Cocktails at the Monstrosity to meet Zaza de Trop and her Fifty Crooning Fiddlers . . . appearing shortly in Tetchicolour short . . . every fiddle to be painted same colour as fiddler's eyes . . . and what flashing eyes they have, those Bulgarian beauties! . . .

* * *

Honduras Melon farming new renting concern . . . to distribute Bullseye's "King and Country" series. . . . Melon's new Bugatti cast £4,000 *. . . has just re-married brother's divorced wife for third time . . . honeymoon at Brighton to tie up with B.F. Conference. . . .*

* * *

All the Street laughing over Ike Mauselbaum's new publicity stunt . . . tie-up with Bettabust Brassieres . . . appears that new Z.B.H. super features Lily Love as lingerie vampire in big store . . . so all Ike's staff wear Bettabust Brassieres under the waistcoat . . . Ike's are outsize . . . engraved on appropriate spot with Z.B.H. monogram. . . .

* * *

Maggot Films announce new super . . . Sir Thomas Browne's "Urn Burial." . . . "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas Daguerre," says Helen Hitler, the adaptor.

* * *

For reasons of personal hygiene "Hotspot" de Tracy is severing his connection with Scram-films. . . .

* * *

STOP PRESS

Studios burnt out yesterday include Superblistertone, Magnanimity, Scramfilms and Chas. W. Oxtong Productions. . . .

* * *

SECRETS OF NATURE

The press announces that film stars wear their own weight in greasepaint, powder and false eyelashes during a year's work. Karloff holds the record, having appeared with over 25 lbs. of muck on his face for a horror part. You could also, if you were a raving lunatic, make a life size model of Norma Shearer out of the amount of greasepaint she uses in a year, and still have 2 lbs. left over to fertilise the raspberry plot with.

It seems quite possible that film stars really have no faces at all, which is quite a comforting thought to go to bed with. (P.S. If all the false teeth in Hollywood were placed end to end one could drive rapidly over them in a steam-roller, and that, thank goodness, would be the end of the Talkies.)

* * *

WITHOUT COMMENT

"He achieved a triumph with the Charles Laughton film *Private Life of Henry VIII*, and followed this up with other successes—*The Scarlet Pimpernel*, H. G. Wells' *Things to Come* and another Wells' story, not yet publicly shown. *The Man Who Could Work Miracles.*"—*Evening Paper.*

LORUM

This month our aureole of birdseed is won hands down by the British Board of Film Censors for banning the word "Sissy" but permitting it to be cut down to "Sis" on existing sound-tracks.

* * *

THESE PRESS SHOW LUNCHEONS

Took a half hour off to meet Sam Spletch this morning and a very good time I had. Plenty of drink flowing and a coupla cigars.

Thence I went to t Furst Nat,, First Natiiinl lUnchn ,which ws also very good and plenty to drkkk to drok,,,,to drik. Got four cigarses and fore ciggers.,,

Leter Ken Maynard.. hic...hic...Splensh feller... luvlyhorsh...hic...hic.. 65j 84 ksm.((9 oh botjer.. hic)

Dave Robson says :—

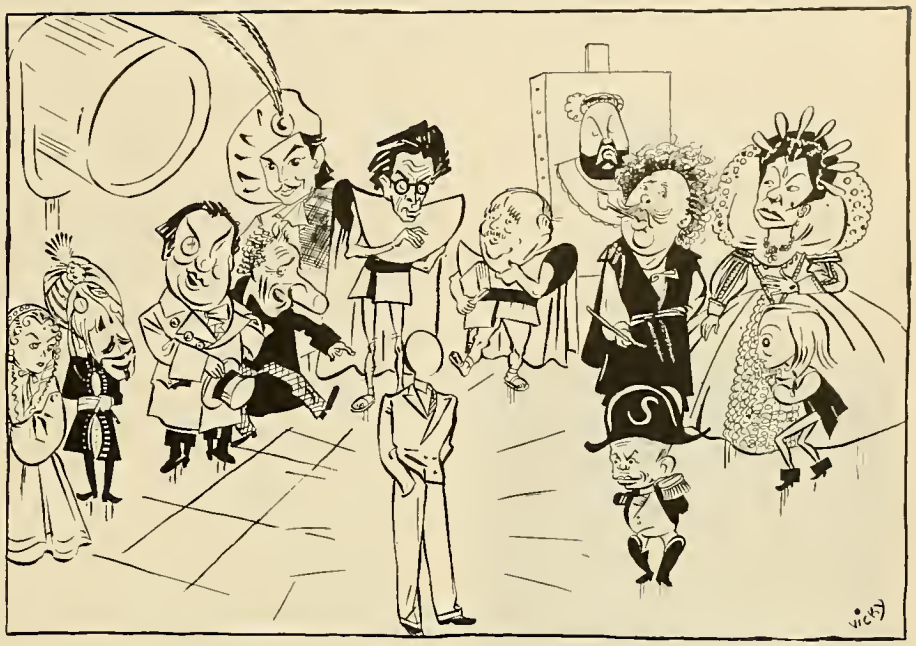
"Necessity being the mother of invention, and anticipating a 'happy event,' I set to work on the application of sound for psychological treatment. First, I took recording apparatus to a maternity hospital and took a sound record in the babies' ward five minutes before feeding time, the continual screaming of sixty babies being faithfully recorded. Secondly, the record was played continuously throughout three nights at home, and on the third night I slept peacefully notwithstanding the infernal noise. The treatment complete, I put it to test during a night when my heir was suffering from a severe attack of the gripes and proceeded to yell his utmost. I heeded not, and slept soundly, awakening quite refreshed and ready for business as usual. But, there are surely many other such annoyances that could be effectively dispelled by the timely use of such sound.

"Would not a sound record of a pneumatic drill chorus reproduced in a dark reverberant enclosure continuously for a few hours remove for all time the hysteria that such noises create in neurotic patients, when only one drill is working?

"Would not a sound record of a dripping tap, a creaking door or even a gnat's buzz, or such like nerve-wreckers with which we are acquainted, prove themselves under such treatment a godsend?

"But, heaven help the recording engineer whose nerves require only the pacifying dead silence of night itself!"

Studio Costume Conference



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CHORUS - - - "ANYHOW IT'S ORIGINAL"

STUDIO JOLLITY

"Although Mr. Fairbanks is such a serious figure in British film production, visitors to the studio tell stories of the happy atmosphere that is produced 'on the floor' through his irrepressible spirits. They say that film-making looks like a jolly family game there, and that this apparent fooling of Mr. Fairbanks actually gets better results because everyone is working under pleasant conditions.

"He is a great practical joker, and every new visitor to his pictures must be prepared to go through some good-humoured ordeal—of which the star's electric chair (which gives a shock to the sitter) is not the least!"—*Evening Standard.*

What happy pictures this conjures up. . . . Miss Dietrich stuffing Von Sternberg's pants with nettles, Mr. Arliss making booby traps for the sound engineers, Mr. Pommer putting mice in the drawers of Mr. Korda's desk, and Jessie Matthews roguishly pouring iron filings into the camera before a take. Oh, Mabel, don't you wish you were in the movie business?

* * *

IMAGINARY INTERVIEWS. No. 1

Statement by a VERY HIGH Official of the Home Office on the subject of Sunday opening of cinemas:—

"You may say that the authorities, speaking generally, and without prejudice to the views of a substantial minority, are of the opinion, or at least might be or might have been of the opinion, that Sunday opening, in its present form, or in any form commensurate with Sunday opening as now conceived, or as it might be conceived at any time hereafter, would be welcomed if all exhibitors who now welcome it did not object to it."

SHAKESPEARE UP-TO-DATE

"All hail, Max Schach! Hail to thee, Thane of Korda!"

* * *

LUCID INTERVAL

"STIX PIX CRIX ON DOWNBEAT"
(Headline in *Variety.*)

* * *

SNOOKS GREISER, "W.F.N.'s" fiendish lift-boy, who traps distinguished visitors between floors, alleges the following conversation with one A. Korda somewhere in the lift-shaft the other day:

Snooks. "So you're bringing the New York critics over here for the première of *Rembrandt*, are you?"

A. Korda. "Let me out! Let me out!"

Snooks. "It'd be easier to send *Rembrandt* over to the New York critics, wouldn't it?"

A. Korda. "Let me out! Let me out!"

Snooks. "But, of course, that way it would cost much less money, wouldn't it? . . . Third floor—babywear, snacks, restroom, dental plates and World Film News."

* * *

USEFUL GIFTS

Victor McLaglen recently presented Freddie Bartholomew with a tear gas gun.

Well, Freddie dear, you know what you can do with it.

* * *

CAMERAMAN'S CORNER

The Wayside Pulpit announces:—

"A PINHOLE IN THE CAMERA WILL FOG THE FINEST PICTURE.
Watch for the little weakness."

French Composers work on Royalty System

by our Paris Correspondent

It is not generally known that very few composers get direct payment for writing music for French films. Both composer and publisher depend for their profits on royalties alone. Some of the results of this system are analysed in this article by our Paris correspondent.

IN MOST French productions the cost of the musical side is very low in proportion to the rest of the expenditure. It is seldom that the music

Honegger

(including orchestra and synchronisation) accounts for more than 1/150th of the total cost; whereas a fifth may go on actors and a twelfth on the scenario. A super production like Feyder's *Kermesse Heroique*, which runs into several million francs, only spends about 50,000 frs. on the music.

The main reasons for this state of affairs are first, that the music to a film is not purchased for a lump sum like the scenario or story rights, and second, that the whole system is based purely on royalties payable to the composer and publisher.

When sound first came in the producers used to make direct payments to the music publishers, and some of the larger houses tried to corner the whole film-music market. The establishment of the copyright system, however, soon changed all this, and nowadays all music is financed on the royalty basis.

The *Société des Auteurs, Compositeurs et Editeurs de Musique* takes a certain percentage of the grosses of all cinemas running the films concerned. This works out at between 2 and 3 per cent of the gross. The Société, after deducting 7½ per cent for expenses, then divides the remainder equally among the author, composer and publisher.

So eager are the publishers to get their royalties that they sometimes pay the producers. In fact, they more or less help to finance the film. They place at the producer's disposal not merely the composer and orchestra, but also the recording studio, entirely free of charge. Some even go as far as paying for the cost of the film for the recording!

In so doing they tend to overstep the mark, letting themselves in for an expenditure of some 30,000 francs without knowing how much their royalties are likely to be.

In general such rashness ends in disaster, as out of 200 films not more than two are likely to bring in as much as 40,000 francs royalties to the publisher. Most reasonable firms do not spend more than five or ten thousand francs on facilities to the producer.

In all these cases the composer works purely on a royalty basis, and receives no fees.

Real rackets spring up when composers turn publishers as well. They get two-thirds of the royalties instead of one-third and can therefore offer much stronger financial assistance to the producing firms. These firms sometimes give up part of their royalties in return for getting exclusive tie-ups for a series of films.

In some cases the composer himself has to help finance the film, and at least one well-known firm has been known to take 50 per cent of the composer's royalties. In this case the film went well, and he didn't lose out. But he was lucky.

One or two of the better-known composers are actually paid cash for their score. Honegger, for instance, is believed to get as much as 50,000 francs per film plus the royalties. He has written music for many notable films, including *Rapt*, *Cessez le Feu*, *L'Equipage*, *Crime et Chatiment*, and the Bartosch-Masereel cartoon *L'Idee*.

Other important composers writing for French films (most of them on the royalty basis) include Milhaud, who scored Renoir's *Madame Bovary* and Painleve's *Sea Horses*, Jaubert, who wrote for the Vigo films and also did Clair's 14 *Juillet*, Auric, another Clair composer in *A Nous la Liberté*, and Jacques Ibert, chiefly known for his work on Pabst's *Don Quixote*.

BRITTEN'S ANIMAL SYMPHONY

Benjamin Britten, well known for his musical scores for recent actuality films, is just completing his first major opus. This is a work for Soprano Solo and Orchestra. The words are taken from early anonymous poems about animals (including monkeys and rats), with a prologue and epilogue written by W. H. Auden. A hearing of the rough score on the piano indicates that this will be an important work. The first performance will be at the Norwich Festival at the end of September.

S. A. B.

Massine

BALLET FOOTNOTE

Last month's notes were too early to include the new de Basil ballet *Symphonie Fantastique*, which definitely puts a new complexion on the achievements of this company. It is probably Massine's finest work, partly, I think, because the Berlioz score provides a ready-made programme and is therefore much more suitable for the purpose than the Tchaikovsky and Brahms used for the earlier efforts in this brand of choreography.

A great many people have been misled by a certain superficial resemblance to the now popular Surrealist movement. This is probably due more to Berard's ingenious and macabre decor than to the choreographic design itself. Actually Massine has done no more than follow Berlioz's programme pretty closely, but he has done it with genius. The third (pastoral) movement is one of the best pieces of pure ballet I have yet seen, and contains a *pas de deux* of unparalleled excellence, danced by Verchinina and Zoritch.

MONTHLY COMPETITION No. 2

A prize of One Guinea and a second prize of half-a-guinea is offered for the best list of five subjects which permit of treatment in any of the following styles;—

1. The dramatised documentary method of, say, *The Song of Ceylon*.
2. The dramatised journalism of *The March of Time*.
3. The realist method represented by *Men and Jobs* or *Louis Pasteur*.
4. The epic manner of *Rhodes of Africa*.

Subjects should deal with the present or the immediate past.

RULES AND CONDITIONS

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the competition in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to **Competitions, World Film News, Oxford House, Oxford Street, W.1.** Solutions must arrive by the first post on Monday, September 21st.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym.

3. The Editors' decision is final. They reserve the right to print the whole or part of any entry sent in. MSS. cannot be returned. If no entries reach the required standard, no prize will be given.

Results of Competition No. 1 will be announced in our October issue.

FILM GUIDE

This guide publishes for each month the playing dates of selected films in central districts of London and the larger provincial towns. Readers will appreciate that this service is not an easy one to maintain. The indifference of some film companies to specialised films prevents this service from being as comprehensive and accurate as we would wish.

SHORTS

Coal Face

PRODUCTION: G.P.O. SOUND DIRECTION: Cavalcanti.

NEWCASTLE: Picture Drome	Sept. 14
Gem	Sept. 16
WIGTON: Palace	Sept. 24

Dragon of Wales

DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

MANCHESTER: Queens	Sept. 7–9
LONDON: Studio Two	Sept. 7–9

Documentary Review of Welsh History.

Face of Britain Series

PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

Great Cargoes

LONDON: Everyman	Week commencing Sept. 7

Progress

LONDON: Everyman	Week commencing Aug. 31
BOURNEMOUTH: News Theatre	Sept. 21, 3 days

Study of developing communications.

This Was England

PORTSLADE: Rothbury	Sept. 10, 3 days

Face of Britain

BOURNEMOUTH: News Theatre	Sept. 7, 3 days
PORTSLADE: Rothbury	Sept. 17, 3 days
SEAFORD: Empire	Sept. 17, 3 days

Citizens of the Future

BOURNEMOUTH: News Theatre	Sept. 14, 3 days
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	Sept. 3, 3 days

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns

PRODUCTION: A. B. Svensk Filmindustri. ENGLISH PREPARATION: D. F. Taylor. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

MORECAMBE: Astoria	Sept. 6, 7 days
NEWCASTLE: News Theatre	Sept. 7, 6 days
WAKEFIELD: Playhouse	Sept. 7, 3 days
CHESTER: Tatler	Sept. 7, 6 days
EXETER: Palladium	Sept. 14, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Lido, Burnage	Sept. 21, 6 days

Night Mail

PRODUCTION: G.P.O. Unit. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

KIRKCALDY: Opera House	Sept. 10
FALKIRK: Picture House	Sept. 17
STIRLING: Regal	Sept. 24
DUMBARTON: Rialto	Sept. 3
GLASGOW: Princes	Sept. 14
ST. ANDREWS: New	Sept. 14
EDINBURGH: Ritz	Sept. 24
Lyceum	Sept. 24
LEEDS: Lyceum	Sept. 7
BIRMINGHAM: Broadway	Sept. 14
NEWCASTLE: Grainger	Sept. 14
Haymarket	Sept. 14
Gem	Sept. 28
LONDON: Studio Two	Sept. 21

SHORTS

Granton Trawler

EDITING: Edgar Anstey. CAMERA: John Grierson. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

NORTON: Cinema	Sept. 10

Sardinia

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

WAKEFIELD: Empire	Aug. 31, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Magnet	Sept. 7, 3 days
WORCESTER: Odeon	Sept. 14, 6 days
BLACKBURN: New Central	Sept. 21, 3 days
NORTHAMPTON: Savoy	Sept. 21, 6 days
MANCHESTER: Tatler	Sept. 28, 6 days

Sicily

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

SOUTHSEA: Plaza	Aug. 30, 7 days
PORTSMOUTH: Regent	Aug. 30, 7 days
BATLEY: Empire	Sept. 10, 3 days
NORTH SHIELDS	Sept. 21, 6 days

Seventh Day

DIRECTION: A. P. Barralet. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

LIVERPOOL: Empress	Aug. 31–Sept. 5
Beresford	Sept. 3–5
LONDON: Studio Two	Sept. 10–12
Picture House, Maida Vale	Sept. 14–20
MANCHESTER: Tatler	Sept. 21–26

6.30 Collection

DIRECTION: Anstey-Watt. PRODUCTION: John Grierson, G.P.O. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

ASHTON-IN-MAKERFIELD: Scala	Sept. 28
BARNET: Odeon	Sept. 5

Secrets of Life Series

EDITING: Mary Field. TECHNICAL SUPERVISION: Percy Smith. PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

LONDON: Everyman

Hedgerows	Week commencing Aug. 31
Queer Diet	Week commencing Sept. 7

Thistledown

EDINBURGH: Kings	Sept. 21, 3 days

He Would a Wooing Go

EDINBURGH: Kings	Sept. 24, 3 days

Wake Up and Feed

PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Sept. 17, 3/4 days

Home from South

PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Sept. 24, 3/4 days

Imaginative depiction of natural processes.

Song of Ceylon

DIRECTION: Basil Wright. PRODUCTION: John Grierson. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.

KETTERING: Coliseum	Sept. 3–5
CHESTER: Tatler	Sept. 14–19
LONDON: World News Theatre, Praed Street	Sept. 14–20

FILM GUIDE (continued)

SHORTS

Under the Water
DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
ALFRETON: Royal — Sept. 14–16
BLACKBURN: New Central — Sept. 24–26

Weather Forecast
PRODUCTION: John Grierson. G.P.O. DIRECTION: Evelyn Spice. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
MOFFAT: Baths Hall — Sept. 17
BLACKPOOL: Imperial — Sept. 20

Windmill in Barbados
PRODUCTION: E.M.B. DIRECTOR: Wright. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
LONDON: Everyman — Sept. 5
ASHBOURNE: Elite — Sept. 28

March of Time: 2nd Year, Issue No. 1
PRODUCTION: Proprietors of "Time." DISTRIBUTION: Radio.

LONDON:	Monseigneur, Strand	Sept. 3, 4 days
	Sphere	Sept. 3, 4 days
	Chequers, St. Albans	Sept. 7, 4 days
	New Park, Shepherds Bush	Sept. 21, 3 days
	Everyman	Sept. 28, 6 days
	Tivoli, Clacton	Sept. 28, 6 days
GLASGOW:	Lyceum, Govan	Sept. 3, 3 days
	Lorne, Ibrox	Sept. 3, 3 days
	Grosvenor, Hillhead	Sept. 7, 6 days
	Orient	Sept. 7, 3 days
	Star, Maryhill	Sept. 21, 3 days
ABERDEEN:	Astoria	Sept. 7, 6 days
	Cinema House	Sept. 24, 3 days
DUBLIN:	Grand Central	Aug. 30, 7 days
LEEDS:	Tower	Sept. 10, 3 days
	Dominion	Sept. 21, 3 days
	Shaftesbury	Sept. 24, 3 days
LIVERPOOL:	Gem, Popular and Coliseum	Sept. 7, 6 days
BRADFORD:	Grange	Sept. 14, 3 days
	Tennyson	Sept. 21, 3 days
	Park	Sept. 24, 3 days
BIRMINGHAM:	New Court	Sept. 28, 3 days
DUNDEE:	Playhouse	Sept. 14, 6 days
BLACKPOOL:	Palladium	Sept. 6, 7 days

ADVERTISING SHORTS

Birth of the Robot (Coloured Puppet Film)
DIRECTION: Humphrey Jennings and Len Lye. PRODUCTION: Gaspar-colour, for Shell.
MANCHESTER: Devonshire — Week beginning Sept. 7
COVENTRY: Astoria — Sept. 7
TORQUAY: Electric — Sept. 7
BIRMINGHAM: Kingsway — Sept. 14
LEICESTER: Coliseum — Sept. 14
HUDDERSFIELD: Tudor Super — Sept. 21
OBAN: Playhouse — Sept. 7
ABERDEEN: Palace — Sept. 21

TIP OF THE MONTH

Green Pastures
From the play by Marc Connelly. Warner Brothers.
We regret that we are unable to give particulars of bookings on this film, as it is "under consideration of the Censors."

FOREIGN FILMS

De Kribbebijter (First Dutch Comedy)
DIRECTION: Herman Kosterlitz, Ernst Winar. PRODUCTION: Holfi. STARRING: August Kiehl.
LONDON: Academy — Aug. 31
Sylvia und Ihr Chauffeur (German)
STARRING: Olga Tschechowa — To follow De Kribbebijter
En Natt (Dutch)
STARRING: Bjorn Berglund.
LONDON: Studio One — Aug. 30–Sept. 3
Marchand D'Amour (French)
DIRECTION: Edmund Greville. STARRING: Jean Galland, Francoise Rosay.
LONDON: Studio One — Sept. 4
Maria Bashkirtseff
STARRING: Lilli Darvas, Hans Jaray.
LONDON: Studio One — Sept. 25
Bed and Sofa (Russian).
PRODUCTION: Sovkine. DIRECTION: Alexander Room. RENTERS: Progressive Film Institute.
LONDON: Forum — Still running

FEATURE FILMS

Turn of the Tide
CROYDON: Odeon — Sept. 6, 1 day
HAMPSTEAD: Everyman — Sept. 7, 7 days
WEALDSTONE: Coronet — Sept. 28, 3 days
Modern Times
PRODUCTION: Chaplin. DIRECTION: Chaplin. STORY: Chaplin. MUSIC: Chaplin. STARRING: Chaplin.

EDINBURGH:	New Victoria	Sept. 7
	Rutland	Sept. 7
	Picture House	Sept. 14
	St. Andrew's Square	Sept. 21
NEWCASTLE:	Queens	Sept. 7
	Westgate	Sept. 21
	Pavilion	Sept. 28
GLASGOW:	Picture House	Sept. 7
MANCHESTER:	Piccadilly	Sept. 14
	Regal	Sept. 28
BIRMINGHAM:	Gaumont Palace	Sept. 21
SOUTHAMPTON:	Regal	Sept. 14
	Pavilion	Sept. 28

Marx Brothers Repertory Season
LONDON: Everyman

"Animal Crackers"	Sept. 14
"Monkey Business"	Sept. 17
"Horse Feathers"	Sept. 21
"Duck Soup"	Sept. 24

FILM SOCIETIES

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY

At Millicent Fawcett Hall, Tufton Street, Westminster, at 8 p.m. on September 2nd, Rev. Dom W. Upson to give a Film Lecture: "A Parish Priest and his Cine Camera," followed by show of Catholic films.

Tickets 1*s.* 6*d.*, 1*s.*

Particulars of the C.F.S. projection unit's services may be had from the Hon. Sec., 36 Great Smith Street, S.W.1. Autumn and Winter term schools displays are already being booked.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS

First show is on Sunday, September 20th: "Peace of Britain," "The Filter," "Housing Problems," "Ship of the Ether," Jazz Comedy" will be shown. October 18th: "Birth of the Robot," "World War and After," "Joie de Vivre," "Blow, Bugles, Blow " (Subject to Watch Committee's approval).

LEICESTER

Monthly exhibitions will begin on Saturday October 24th. There will be two shows, at 6 and 8.30 p.m. Among the films to be shown in the coming season will be "Crime et Chatiment," "Die Ewige Maske," "The Brothers Karamazov," "The Day of the Great Adventure," "De Kribbebijter," "Merlusse," "Ivan," "Pescados," "Liebes Melodie," "Bonne Chance," "Aero Grad." These bookings are provisional and the exact dates for showing have not yet been fixed.

During the month of September most film societies will have completed their plans for the coming season and W.F.N. will be able to publish fuller and more exact information about their programmes in the October issue.

world FILM news

Film news and features from all over the world
Review of Reviews—edited by H. E. Blyth
What the Film Societies are doing and thinking
Meetings and Acquaintances
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world FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

SPOTLIGHT ON THE CRITICS

BOULESTIN'S FILM RECIPES

MARCH OF TIME UNDER FIRE

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CERTIFICATE "A"

LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 800 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston.
Synod Hall ...	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware.
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maiden Head.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Straford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation ...	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork.
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth.
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz	Doncaster.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.

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A typical examination by the L.C.C. to detect malnutrition in schoolchildren.

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world FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

VOL. I NO. 7 PRICE: ONE SHILLING OCTOBER 1936

Spotlight on the Critics

By "One of the Two Chairmen."

IS THERE A FILM journalist living who is not a hero to his friends? Can there be one among that vast army of screen gossipers, cinema critics, and studio correspondents, who has never heard, from his family circle, from his fellow rail-tappers in the "Waggon and Horses," from his postman and his potman, his tailor and his ticket collector, that heartfelt cry, half of envy and half of reverence, "It must be wonderful meeting all those stars!"? If such there be go mark him well for he is indeed a man among men.

If only the bitter sordid truth were known, if it were possible for that reverential, awed army of fans—whose will to worship gives us who live by the film industry the wherewith to pay our baker—to witness the garish and macabre process of interviewing these Godsent luminaries of the celluloid firmament, to see the zealous, aye and ofttimes intelligent scribe, hovering on the edge of the feast, pecking at the few dry bones of copy which are left when Wardour Street has done with its stars, the lustre and the glamour—oh, blessed word !—might fade, and instead of envy and reverence, the sacred virtue of pity remain.

Wardour Street still thinks of its stars in the same way the butcher thinks of his carcases. They are excellent commodities to sell provided they look juicy. Unfortunately, Wardour Street has not yet got out of the way of introducing its press to its stars in the style of the cattle market.

Once there were romantic days when the film scribe would meet his "copy" in a De Mille bedroom, when a playfully dangled pick-nailed toe, a lingering odour of "Eau de Nil," and languid comments on the charm of London chimney-pots, gave him something to write about and more to remember. I have myself talked to at least one star in her bath—she was that way—listened to the drawl of another interspersed with the grunts and thwacks of the masseur, driven a third to the Kentish coast, and been driven back by him. But those elegant occasions were either exceptional or in the good old days.

Nowadays we do it, or rather don't do it, en masse. To the uninitiated the "star reception" or "star interview" is probably unknown. It is the basis and backbone of the jelly-fish which passes for personal copy to-day. Yes, I know that jellyfish have no backbones. Nor has our copy!

It may be that Wardour Street will defend its mass interviews on the grounds that there being so many journals anxious for film copy it would be impracticable to treat them seriatim. To this the serious journalist will reply that the copy which results from these cattle-market occasions is of no use to anybody, least of all to the company which sponsors the star. But Wardour Street never had any sense of values. It measures its publicity by the line: it ignores what lies between. There are, in the Street, members of the publicity departments who are detailed, morning by morning, to go through the daily papers with a footrule and a

'ARE YOU GIVING UP VAMP RÔLES?'

calculator. If another concern has netted more lines or more inches that morning, then heaven help the press representative!

So it is that when a star comes to town, any star, starlette or adolescent flippertigibbet who has worked, or played, in Hollywood, the trumpet sounds. Ere the mishappy one has sighted land, the clarion has been heard in every office in Fleet Street, Wardour Street and Long Acre. The *Times* hears it. So does the *Chipping Sodbury Sentinel*. In the sacrosanct corridors of the P.A. its notes reverberate. Its higher frequencies twitter in the Midlands.

WARDOUR STREET FROM WITHIN

"Maybe," writes the author, a well-known film journalist, "your readers may be amused to have a spotlight on how Wardour Street values and runs its star publicity. If it convinces anybody that the poor benighted star is not always a zany it will have performed one useful function."

At 5.30 in the Pinafore Room of the Savoy, or the Hill Park Suite at the Grosvenor, or the Blue Room of the Dorchester, or, for the Elect of the Elect, the Holier than Holies at Claridges, they "are invited to meet . . ."

The locale may differ. The star will of course seldom be the same. But it will always be 5.30. Why? you may ask! Because the quaintly devised laws of this happy land of ours debar even a film company, or a star, from serving John Barleycorn to its—or her—guests in a public restaurant save between the accepted licensing hours. There are ways and means of course. A star can take a private suite, or a production concern have a standing rental of a room. But these occasions demand expansiveness, room to loll and roam about, and besides, did I not say that as well as Printing House Square we must have Chipping Sodbury and Nether Wallop?

So, rebellious at the insistence of this institution, sublimely sceptical that we shall get anything worth while, beyond an Old Fashioned Southern Mint Julep, possibly, but not probably, a Romeo y Julieta, and certainly a glorious hangover, we wend our way thither. By 5.30 everyone is there but the star. The old familiar faces, in the old familiar groupings, abaft the old familiar beakers. The stocky dour Scotsmen from the agencies. The sprightly youngsters from the fan press. The trade paper representatives with their air of experienced disillusion. Here are a group of daily men whose names make news. There a benign and motherly soul who was a pioneer of chatty film journalism. There are clusters of alert little women with the eager manner of sparrows. Whom they represent nobody knows. But they know just what questions they are going to ask. On the fringe hovers a very detached ambassador of the *avant garde*. Highly Paid Executives dispense official bonhomie. A cameraman with a battery of Sashalites surveys the herd sadly.

We wait, the more reckless of us removing glasses of occult liquor from the trays which waiters, with a quiet respect born of years of waiting, carry in and out of the throng. The agency men, and one or two hard-bitten provincials knowledgably stay by the bar—and the Scotch.

At last She arrives, on the arm of the publicity man, radiantly smiling, chin uptilted, removing her gloves, her eyes as cold as a mausoleum. The herd closes in, the women to the fore, the sparrows in the forward line. For a brief moment the publicity man seeks to introduce Her . . . "Do you know . . .," ". . . and . . .," ". . . and Mr. . . ." and then gives it up. Like a poor frightened animal driven by the pack, She retreats defensively to a settee. The more aggressive sob sisters, and possibly a Fleet Street man who is still a Fan, close down. The vanguard form a phalanx. The interview has begun.

The cynics retire to the bar. The bar-loungers return to their cynicism. A Sashalite blazes. From the distance there comes a feminine voice, "Are you giving up vamp roles?" From the bar: "Thanks, I'll have a Haig!"

As desperately we saunter nearer, come question and answer. "Are you going to make any films here?" "What do you think of colour?" "Have you seen any British films?" "Where do you get your evening gowns?" "Were you really engaged to . . .?" "Is Zasu Pitts really funny in real life?" "Wouldn't you like to play maternal roles?" "Are you very fond of children?" . . . All that debars me from giving further specimens of the interrogator's art is that my readers would not believe them.

I remember one sad-eyed but smiling lady who asked Fred Astaire: "Has it ever occurred to you, Mr. Astaire, that there is an affinity between your art and that of the ballet?" I remember, too, Astaire's blushing confusion and a muttered halting reply about ". . . these Russian joints" . . . and . . . "hot music."

So the massacre goes on. She, her back to the wall, answering courteously and pleasantly the incessant barrage of questions fired at Her, questions ceaseless in variety, often pointless in purpose. There are still dozens of my confrères who fail to realise that a film star is a creature of flesh and blood with tastes and appetites not far removed from their own.

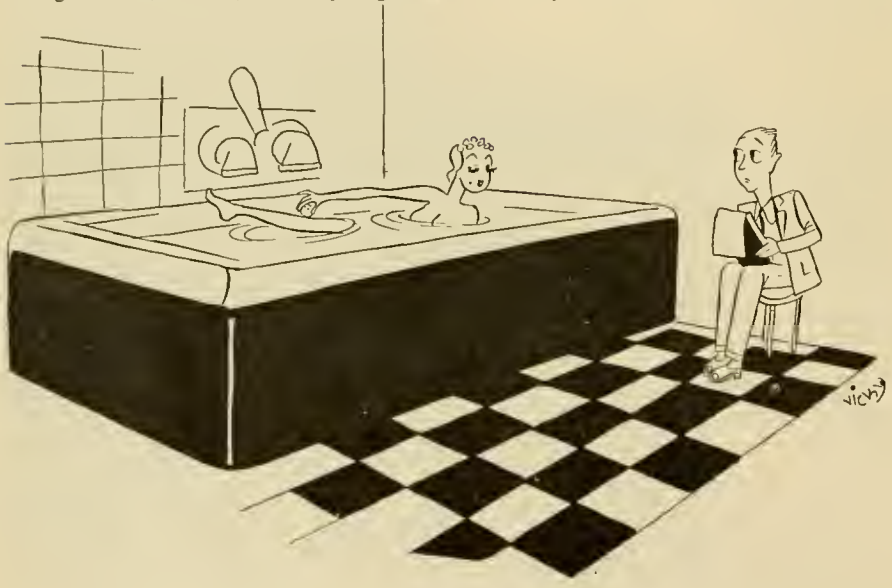
If their own resistance breaks after a time, and through a gap in the ranks we make our way, to seek a line or two which may make readable news or gossip, the odds are that we shall get a shinbone bruised or a pocket torn in the process. Sometimes a discreet press representative does try and make amends by sitting us beside the star. Either our questions are lost beneath a shower of chatter from some whinnying apprentice to the journalistic craft, or the girl is by that time so fatigued and bemused that she scarce can answer intelligibly.

There are publicity men who have a circulation manager's mind, and will, with everything but a bow, shepherd the film critic of one of the many millioned dailies, to his star, and even run and fetch him a Dry Martini. It is sardonic comment that for them the scribes have nought but contempt. There are others who separate the crowd into groups and bring them along in turn.

"... THAT THERE IS AN AFFINITY BETWEEN YOUR ART AND THAT OF THE BALLET?"

But the whole system and process is monumentally absurd. It is inimical and fatal to all that intelligent journalism means. It does not give the serious newspaperman a chance. It is completely unfair to the star. The former cannot be expected to perform his legitimate function efficiently. The latter cannot be expected to be herself or even to evince any signs of the intelligence she very often possesses.

I have had my own exceptional experiences and they stand out. I cherish delicious memories of meeting Paul Muni on his first visit here, of having him and his wife completely to myself in their Savoy suite, and talking, over tea, about Chekov, and the Five Year Plan, and folk music. It showed a man beneath a star, and you can write about men. So too do I remember an "interview" with Eddie Robinson which was soon tanslated into a lazy browse among the latest Mencken, George Jean Nathan and Hemingway which I found among his luggage. That too was *a deux*. There have been other intimate moments which have given me copy—and friends. But if I have ever dug from a mass interview one line of mature copy, an item of news or gossip which meant anything to my readers, it has been because I am a newspaperman and in spite of the circumstances. And so it is with the major section of my fraternity.



"I HAVE MYSELF TALKED TO AT LEAST ONE STAR IN HER BATH —"

The system, if such it can be called, will, of course, continue, and cineastes of Bayswater and the fans of Fulham will as heretofore be fobbed off with the merest trivialities and frothy fictions which even the conscientious film scribe must content himself with, to placate the newsroom. Wardour Street, as I have said, has no use for quality, little time for criticism. It will measure its "breaks" by the total of lineage rather than their appeal to the intelligent film fan, and be content. Meanwhile both hypnotised factory hands and film-conscious undergrads will continue to dismiss movie stars as glamorous imbeciles, and film scribes as psychophantic dolts, blissfully unconscious of the fact that if there is imbecility it is very obviously elsewhere.

But this is no apologia for the film journalist. He can take it, even though it be not so easy, maybe, to dish it out. Rather is it a plea for that maybe misunderstood, certainly maltreated, phenomenon the star. There are nincompoops and nitwits among the species, Heaven knows. But don't be too sure that you, dear trusting reader, can tell which and who. Wardour Street is after space, not specifics. It would be content with the Desert if it could be measured in lines.

And you know what airmen call the Desert? It might well be applied to star copy . . . "Mile after ruddy mile of sweet Fanny-Ann."

(Illustrations: Copyright Vicky Publications)

EDITORIAL

To our Jewish colleagues in Wardour Street and to Jewish readers at home and abroad we wish a Good New Year.

Film Institute Reform

On October 8th, the Film Institute will hold its Third Annual Meeting. An air of the "high egregious" has attended the Annual Meetings of the Film Institute in the past. The same old generalisations about education and culture have been trotted out. The same old wordy claims have been made as to the value of work done. The same old window has been dressed so that the seven thousand pound grant of the Privy Council might again be forthcoming. Most important of all, the same old team—more or less—has appeared on the Governing Board.

It is a weak team. It has allowed the cultural purpose of the Institute to sicken and die under its Governorship. It has made the Institute a source of ridicule and distrust. To the outside world come rumours of quarrels and squabbles. We have heard of inside reforms that were too late in the making and of imprudent excursions into commercial politics.

The whole business savours of the second rate. And, by association, the cause of the educational and cultural film is made shabby.

One or two of the governors command our respect, but the loss of public confidence is too considerable to allow of nice distinctions. We suggest that the whole team should separate itself as soon as possible from the muddle it has made and the public trust it has disappointed; and this, indeed, is the usual and honourable practice of public servants.

Is the film trade satisfied with its representatives? Do they represent the most appropriate and progressive elements in the industry? Is the public satisfied with its representatives? Do they adequately stand for the thousands of educationists and social workers whose needs the Institute has failed to serve and failed to co-ordinate? Are the public bodies who have power to nominate governors satisfied with life-time appointments? Is the Privy Council satisfied? Is it satisfied that an Institute so officered and in such internal ill-health is wisely administering its very generous grant of seven thousand pounds per annum? For our part, we are anything but satisfied and, outside the governors' ring, we know of no one else who is.

To the management of the Institute—to Oliver Bell, William Farr and Miss Vaughan—we continue our unabated support. They are good people and we are sorry for them. But in the circumstances we can only advise that the governors should take thought. We look for new names at the annual meeting of the Film Institute. If there are no new names, we believe the final eclipse of the Institute is only a matter of time.

The Sixth Beatitude

Mr. Deeds has come to town and the box office records have gone flying. It is a remarkable phenomenon. The high-brows and the low-brows are for once agreed and the nightly parade from the Marble Arch has the warm glow of a public festivity.

Deeds is by no means a perfect film. The direction drags and, is, at times, just a trifle too clever. The economics of the film are atrocious and there could be nothing more false than to suggest that the spasmodic generosity of an exceptional millionaire is a solace for our ills. But *Deeds* obviously has something which warms the cockles of every heart. It is so old and fundamental a something that we recommend it to the attention of every student of popular appeal.

The theme of *Deeds* is, all over again, the sixth Beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount, wherein attention is directed to the pure in heart. Mr. Deeds himself enjoys the blessing of it, and his audience enjoys the promise of it, and the crowds mill round the Regal, and the coffers of Mr. Maxwell swell in consequence.

It is usual to say that the public is fickle and that its taste is crude. It may often seem so, but the sight of our hard-faced brethren melting—even as they did two thousand years ago—before the bewildering honesty of Deeds, might give the cynic pause. When Mr. Nick Schenck wants to condemn a film, he points disappointedly to his throat and says, "No lump!" Who knows, he may hereafter point to the heavens above and say "No Beatitude!" It will be a pretty picture.

A prettier picture still will be the Saturday night gathering of Joe Schenck, Louis B. Mayer, Sam Goldwyn and Isidore Ostrer with, shall we say, Arthur Dent, Ben Henry, Max Schach and C. M. Woolf in reverent attendance. They will be reading, verse by verse, the Fifth Chapter of Saint Matthew and the light of box office will be in their eyes.

The Threat to B.B.C. Monopoly

There are problems in the development of television which concern the public interest and concern it now. Chief of these is the threat to the B.B.C. monopoly which is intrinsic in the technical possibilities of television. Will it be a real monopoly when television is big enough and cheap enough to be used by the film theatres?

Consider the possibilities. The film combines may find it economic to televise their films direct to the theatres. They may wish to rationalise their vaudeville service by televising it from a central studio. They may wish to televise their newsreels direct from the current event. The B.B.C.'s monopoly of the air need not deter them. They have only to use the wires.

Consider the consequences. The public screen and the home screen will enter into immediate competition and the B.B.C.'s monopoly will have shrunk to a portion of the field. With less money for programmes than the film combines it cannot compete in the matter of popular screen entertainment. Its important news service can be outshouted by the commentators of the theatre round the corner. Lecture and discussion will be its mainstay and the B.B.C. will stand to television as the non-theatrical field now stands to Wardour Street.

It is not so certain as we at first imagined that television is being held for the nation. What is there to prevent the use of television by wire for the programmes of advertising and party propaganda which we have, in this country, sought to avoid? We require an assurance from the B.B.C. that it will hold to every possible right over television. It is a matter of pride that we have prevented the indiscriminate exploitation of radio. It will be an error of statesmanship if we fail to do the same for television.

These are our views. No doubt our colleagues of the Trade Press will think differently. The bone is theirs for the chewing.

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MAJOR HARDING COX

Since the publication in the August issue of *W.F.N.* of an analysis of the British Board of Film Censors, we have received a cordial letter from Major Harding de Fonblanque Cox pointing out that he is not a member of the B.B.F.C. staff.

We are therefore happy to withdraw the paragraph which associated him with the Board's examiners and to absolve him from all responsibility in the affairs of British film censorship.

"... wonderful piece of sleuthing..."

"... automobile disaster ... won't stop drivers..."

March of Time under the Scalpel—

By George Dangerfield

Is it Fascist?

(*With acknowledgments to the New Republic*)

RECENT ISSUES of The March of Time (screen version) have created a good deal of excitement in my local theatre. The demonstrations started last spring with the episode dramatising the dilemma of the League of Nations. This episode seemed to revel in the contemplation of might and disaster: it invited us to join in the spree—to hurry to and fro like Eden, shriek like Hitler, wear Mussolini's helmet, weep with Cecil of Chelwood. And we did; very surprisingly, for my local theatre is normally a drowsy place. We were emotional, we hissed and cheered. And all the time the narrator's voice rose serenely above our distressing clamor, talking behind the screen like a Greek actor behind his mask. Just such a voice, I feel sure, would have been hired to speak the lines of one of Euripides' suave male gods—those gods who appeared so opportunely at the end of a tragedy, when everything was going up in flames and agnosticism, and explained matters away. Nobody has ever been quite sure what those gods believed in or whether they even believed in themselves; and this gives them a real affinity with the voice that does the talking for The March of Time.

The March of Time has come in for a good deal of criticism at one time and another. It has been criticised for being (a) clever (b) melodramatic (c) fascist. The accusation of cleverness could hardly have worried it, cleverness being quite the thing these days, witness the circulation of Time magazine. And it is only the very, very sensitive who complain of melodrama. They don't like the assumption that time does not pass but marches; and they say that when the immediate past is resurrected, tidied up, recreated in pictures, it is very trying to be informed, by implication, that none of these things could have taken place if time had not been something like a military band and history something like a circus. This has reason in it, but one has to realise that The March of Time is selling history at a profit, and this can't be done without a trick or two. Besides, there *is* a tendency towards melodrama in human affairs, and this tendency produces its heroes and its villains, and just occasionally one of them bobs up in national affairs. I like The March of Time's melodrama. Its heroes are all that heroes should be; they are energetic, human, fallible. For example, there was Dr. Hartmann who invented a balm that would take the pain out of tooth-drilling, but which doesn't work on all teeth. Another hero was Mr. Furnas: he wrote a tremendous piece on automobile disasters, but it won't entirely stop drivers from cutting in. And what better villain could there be than Monsieur de Paris, the executioner? The cameraman pursued him—shunned by all men, a Western untouchable—as he left with his guillotine; caught him setting it up in a smoky dawn; and followed him home at evening to his tomblike

Richard de Rochemont

house, breathing damp and decorum, in the suburbs of Paris. It was a wonderful piece of sleuthing: perhaps not gory enough for the gallery, but a shudder ever minute.

It is only when The March of Time gets off to highly controversial subjects that its melodrama disappears and something careless and complacent takes its place. If only it had absolutely refused to go any further than Devil's Island and dope rings and automobile disasters, which are human and important! But it wants to go further. It wants to thrill us with the collapse of a civilisation; and last year it was confronted with the most serious accusation of all. People of all shades of opinion swore that it was going fascist. In one episode it appeared to suggest, with approval, that the C.C.C. boys were about to creep up on democracy, like Birnam Wood upon Dunsinane, behind the disguise of a reforestation scheme. Another episode showed the U.S. Army manœuvres. A third, and this was the worst, was very kind to the Croix de Feu.

A formidable thunder rolled, from right to left, from The Herald Tribune to The New Masses; and The March of Time, alarmed at this unanimous attack, hastily scrambled back to safer ground. To have sent such an episode into so many theatres was an infuriating gesture, even if an unintentional one; and the evidence against its being unintentional was overwhelming. If the Croix de Feu was news —this being The March of Time's excuse—wasn't the People's Front news too? No answer.

The next issue found The March of Time in full retreat, and being sympathetic to the "bootlegger" of anthracite coal in Pennsylvania. But criticism was not silenced. An article in the **American Spectator** of last March brought up the fascist issue along with some others. It charged: (1) That Time's directorate was liberally peppered with Morgan's hirelings. Morgan connections and the representatives of big business. (2) That the Croix de Feu episode was made by a brother of Louis de Rochemont, vice-president in charge of March of Time's production, and reputedly a man of definite fascist views. (3) That the anthracite episode was sympathetic to the great coal operators; that Martin Egan, one of Time's directors, is J. P. Morgan's publicity man; and that J. P. Morgan controls the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company.

Somehow I can't believe in such deliberate subtlety. The films themselves don't bear it out. . . . But if there is no very definite evidence of conspiracy in The March of Time, could there be evidence of something worse? And if so, what is it? . . .

Like the Deity, it (The March of Time) observes without prejudice, or pretends to. It claims to present both sides of every question, and that is an admirable claim: except that there is generally a third side to every question, and frequently a fourth and fifth. In its last year's

" . . . melodrama in human affairs . . . ."

Third Degree

Third-Degree Victim

—and a Reply — Pity the Journalist!

By John Grierson

episode, dealing with Bergoff's strike-breakers, it first of all allowed Mr. Bergoff to have his say, who protested that he stood for law and order. Then it showed how Mr. Bergoff's thugs were driven out of Georgia at the request of Governor Talmadge, who had been persuaded—with not too much difficulty, I should imagine—to re-enact his part in this fight for justice. At the end of it all, the Euripidean voice announced that the social conscience of America had taken a considerable step forward. But there was a third side to this question which The March of Time had neglected, and which the partial observer might think the most important side of all. It had neglected to inquire whether the textile strikers of Georgia would be much worse off when subjected to Mr. Bergoff's social conscience than when at the mercy of the Governor's. It had not pointed out that, while Mr. Talmadge sent Mr. Bergoff's employees away with one hand, with the other he continued to break strikes. That bit about social conscience was the weak spot. If it had called this episode "Bergoff muscles in on Governor's territory," it would have told a truth. As it was, it told a lie. Such are the effects of taking no sides . . .

In one issue it managed to throw the same fog over the ministerial murders in Tokyo. It wanted to be fair both to the murderers and the corpses. . . The episode had apparently taken no sides; it had praised the butchers and the butchered. But what did it really mean? . . . You had paid your money, and you could take your choice.

That is the trouble: you have paid your money. There is a lot of money involved in The March of Time, and how can it afford to risk offending anyone by telling a deliberate truth? Against an argument like this, I realise that all I have been saying is not criticism but a wish. I purpose. I wish they would say—outright, beyond question—that somebody was right or wrong: even if that somebody was the Morgans, or Mussolini, or the masses. Then we could attack them or defend them, and they would be exciting their audiences honestly. But that is only a wish. Unless there really are liberal minds somewhere in The March of Time who would be glad to take a chance on photographing the roots instead of the branches. What an opportunity they have, if they could take it and would!

I AGREE WITH Dangerfield's analysis—and it is a brilliant analysis—but I wish I could agree with his conclusions.

In the first place, pay no attention to the charge that Richard de Rochemont is a fascist. I give you my word he is not. He is a deeper and more difficult problem. He is a journalist, and a film journalist at that. The real heart of Dangerfield's attack lies in his passage about punch. "March of Time picks out those bits of contemporary history which seem to pack the most punch." The Croix de Feu was a story with punch and de Rochemont told it as a good journalist would.

But here is the sad part of the record, as I can testify in fact. De Rochemont wanted to balance his Croix de Feu with a slab of the Front Populaire and shot for it. But this, remember, was in the days before the Front Populaire was making the organised show it is to-day. It lacked screen value and the balancing factor (judicial, political, New Republic, Dangerfield or what you will) did not make the screen.

Blame de Rochemont perhaps. He ought, you may say, to have built the discussive huddles of the Front Populaire into something of screen value. The plain fact is that, riding to the tempo of March of Time production and March of Time editing, the Front Populaire stuff was dull and it was out. De Rochemont, journalist, said, "Hell, maybe we can get an angle on the Front Populaire sometime." In his story of French peasants, he subsequently did. The discarded material appeared this time, and in dramatic focus.

There, I believe, is the real issue. March of Time is not fascist, complacent, irresponsible or any of the villainies charged. It picks the bits of contemporary history that pack the punch, as a screen journal must. Eight thousand theatres of circulation need tempo in the story telling, sensation, novelty, clash, suspense, in fact all those things which entertainment on a mass scale imposes on a film producer. But if, on the other hand, you were to show March of Time that the British Museum had the requisite elements of tempo, etc., etc., March of Time, I have no doubt, would do it.

One thing certainly that will not work is to *wish* that March of Time would do this, that or the other thing. Not in the theatres. As Dangerfield himself says, it is "selling history at a profit and this can't be done without a trick or two." "Time . . . something like a military band, history . . . something like a circus": these are the conditions of showmanship. All we can ask is that the deeper aspects of time and history be turned into the idiom of military band and circus. Given a mass appeal the idiom of the cinema theatre rules. The theme, on the other hand, may be as deep as the producer knows how to translate into the idiom, and *Pasteur* is an example.

Taking sides doesn't solve the matter. The angle (hell, etc.) must be there—a dramatic angle or nothing. And a desire to show the entire four or five sides does not solve the matter, either. In the atmosphere of the cinema, where political discussion is only a curtain-raiser to Garbo, complication is the devil. The danger is that we would have no March of Time at all. We might soon be back in the blithering grip of the newsreels.

There is, in fact, naïveté in Dangerfield's wish. If we are to show the "roots instead of the branches," why the theatres at all? The real place for these deeper discussions and these more sober judgments is surely in the non-theatrical field, and in the prospect of television. That is where people —the same people—will sit down to think about things and discuss them. In the film societies and the adult education groups and the literary societies and the church groups (a hundred thousand of them) is where Dangerfield's dream has a chance of coming true.

I will lay a bet that in a couple of years March of Time will have realised the fact. In that case we shall have two versions of March of Time stories: the hotcha version for the theatres, because that is the way and mood of the theatres and a more discussive version for television and the halls, because that is the way and mood of the halls. Every progressive who has a sense of direct action comes to realise this distinction and organises the non-theatrical field for the great public service it can perform.

But, my great respect to George Dangerfield, and I like the reference to Euripides. I have often wondered where I had heard the March of Time commentator before. I only pray he will not read the story and get himself a larger size in buskins. They are long enough—and so are his speeches.

What is ART?

Laughter and Tears says Conrad Veidt

THE ATMOSPHERE of stardom clings to Conrad Veidt. He waves you rather grandly to a chair. Even the script girl is a bit in awe of him.

But you find, as you talk to him, that the 'grand manner' is natural.

It is a blend of German arrogance and true Irving in the tradition—an acceptance, as a right, of the deference due to the star of the footlights or the Kliegs.

It is refreshing, rather than otherwise, in these days of jumped-up stars and baby darlings of the gods.

Yet no one is less contemptuous of his fans than Mr. Veidt.

"You talk to me of Art and intelligent appeal," he said, leaning forward and fixing me with a stern stare from behind his monocle, "What is Art?

"The film actor's audience is not the limited audience of the theatre, it is—how many millions, I don't know.

"And if you can please those millions—if you can get some emotion, it may be laughter or tears, over to them—that is Art, is it not?

"You can be just as inartistic being highbrow as being lowbrow. But we are getting highbrow now, no?" He laughed.

"You know," he broke off, "I had the biggest thrill of my life yesterday. I walked round from my house in Hampstead to the Golders Green Hippodrome. I saw Gracie Fields.

"What an artist! A personality that will make a success anywhere, amongst your 'intelligent' West End, or your provinces."

The monocle gleamed.

"I tell you," he repeated, "I had the thrill of my life.

"You see," the sternness went, and Mr. Veidt smiled disarmingly, "it is the personality. The sixpennies and the twelve-and-sixpennies feel the same. To get at the people it is the human touch that counts.

"I used to make some of your 'artistic' films," he went on, with an inverted comma emphasis, "perhaps you remember some of them in the old silent days?

"Do you remember *Dr. Caligari*? I got"—impressively—"750 marks for the whole picture—about £50 then.

"And now, artists, production, everything costs so many times more."

"But have we advanced comparatively?" I asked.

Mr. Veidt nodded. "Oh yes, technique—equipment—look at these studios here at Denham—equal to any in the world."

I coughed. "But," I asked, "are we producing pictures that appeal to the intelligent public?"

There was nearly an explosion. Mr. Veidt glared at me.

"Who," he demanded, "is the intelligent public? The mass includes the intelligent people. And if the mass says the picture is good——"

"So it's better to produce Garvice than Chesterton?" I suggested sadly.

Mr. Veidt shook his head.

"No, no," he said. "You don't follow. You assume that a picture is unintelligent because it appeals to the mass.

"Do you know, when the *Passing of the Third Floor Back* was shown, it wasn't such a big success in the West End, but it did well on general release.

"But I had such fan letters. I could show you, not silly ones, from stage-struck girls, but letters from elderly men and women, letters telling me the writers had found a new interest, a new meaning, in life. Letters that spoke of how the writer had seriously thought of suicide before they saw the picture.

"Oh no, you mustn't laugh at fan mail, my dear friend. It is my barometer—the measure of my applause and success.

"You, admittedly, are not a paper for the fans, but the fans matter a great deal."

I conveyed, delicately, to Mr. Veidt that his pictures were not so good as they used to be; perhaps, I hinted, British directors were not treating him properly.

Monocled star Conrad had a good many answers to this.

"My dear friend," he said, "no one wants to make a lousy picture. The director doesn't, the cameraman doesn't, the star doesn't, the company doesn't.

"Sometimes a director like Korda can afford to make an experiment. Korda spent £150,000 on *Henry VIII*, and it might have failed. It did not.

"Why? Because, though it was about Kings and Queens, it was a King's *private* life; it succeeded on the human element, not the spectacular.

"Sometimes a star can afford to wait till he gets the right part and the right picture. Laughton does.

"I wait as long as I can. I am very particular, because never, never, am I satisfied.

"Then when I have waited so long, I have to put up with what I can get."

"Of course," he went on, "directors, actors, no one is always at his best. You yourself write a bad article sometimes, no?"

"No——I mean yes," I agreed.

"But the real fault of the picture every time is ,not ours. It is yours." And he shook a menacing finger at me.

"Mine?" I echoed timidly.

Mr. Veidt broke into a smile again.

"Yes," he said, "You writers. You don't give us good stories. It's the stories that are the weak points, and they ought to be the strong ones, not the stars or the directors."

Having thus disposed of the matter he sat back.

"That's all very well," I objected, "but one hears that the studios won't look at unsolicited stories, that they're afraid to read scripts in case they get a copyright infringement action afterwards."

Veidt shook his head impatiently.

"Listen," he said, "I get hundreds of scripts sent to me. I read every one of them, searching, hoping for something, a gleam, a glimmer of an idea, perhaps.

"But what do I find?" He spread out his hands expressively. "Nothing—I find nothing. And I still go on looking."

I asked Mr. Veidt why *Jew Suss*, made by Jews for Jews, wasn't the success it promised to be.

He sighed. "Ah," he said, "there was a picture. Took a lot of money at first, and then . . .

"The Jews didn't like it. Why? Maybe because I'm a 'goy.' I don't know. But my Jewish friends told me it wasn't that.

"They say it was because in these times, it is bad policy to make a picture that tackles or emphasises racial differences.

"The Jews are too deeply concerned with the persecution question that has troubled the world for the last few years to patronise pictures that deal, however sympathetically, with the problem.

"You see? It's still the story that makes or mars . . .

"Next year," he told me, "I'm going to make a picture myself, direct it.

"You know, every actor wants to be his own boss—wants to produce. And you would laugh if I told you the subject."

The director's whistle blew. Mr. Veidt said good-bye grandly, bowed stiffly.

I made my way out of the studio, past the group of foreign art directors arguing in fierce whispers, past the boy with the tray of autograph books, past the door marked "Savoy Grill," past the watchful guard at the padded doors of the studio.

Inside, Mr. Veidt was still talking in that fascinating foreign accent, this time to millions of fans.

Perhaps he was thinking, absently, of them, and of his picture that he will direct—about the private life of a London policeman.

DENIS MYERS

Ireland Shapes New Film Policy

By NORRIS DAVIDSON

IRELAND HAS long been regarded as the lawful prey of any English-speaking director. Far back in the silent days films were being turned out in the South with the ease and freedom peculiar to those days, though the producers were not conscious of it, just as we of sound-and-monochrome will not be conscious of our present freedom until colour and subsequent stereoscopy bind us firmly.

There is scarcely a lake and positively no fell in Killarney that has not been pressed into service and one railway terminus in Dublin has provided Roman and Egyptian sets for English companies before now.

It was in about the year 1923 that the first serious attempt at a national film was made—*Irish Destiny*, produced by Eppel Films, a story of the War for Independence, using many of those who had participated. At this lapse of time one remembers it as a very good film accompanied by gunfire in the orchestra pit. Dear days of the fighting epic, when the auditorium was thick and dizzy with Brock's cannonades!

After that it was not until *Song o' My Heart* that Ireland again came into prominence. This was a 1930 talking-picture featuring John MacCormack, discovering Maureen O'Sullivan and directed by Frank Borzage. It was the first of many "Irish" films to show a few scenes in Ireland (for genuineness, old friend) and to turn the rest in foreign studios. Several minor pictures on these lines followed, the best probably being *General John Regan* (B. & D.). There was also *Irish Hearts* (Clifton-Hurst), a production eloquent of the many vicissitudes through which it passed.

But it was Robert Flaherty with *Man of Aran* who made the first attempt to approach an all-Irish production, sound only being added in London. His little cluster of buildings in Kilmurvey is the inspiration of the new Irish cinema. *Damhsa Arann* (Davidson), a short on a particular type of dance, followed. *The Dawn* is the first really Irish film to date. It was written, filmed, directed, recorded, developed, printed and cut by "Hibernia Films" in Killarney. This is also a War for Independence story, directed and acted by actual participants.

"Hibernia Films," directed by Tom Cooper—a Killarney garage proprietor, began by developing forty-foot lengths of film in a chemist's shop. The results were visible.

Then they experimented with sound, discovering for themselves the three-phase system for sound and camera; the results were more or less audible. Then, in a four-by-two studio with converted trawler's lights, they made *The Dawn*. Inevitably it is very weak technically, but one is confident that the producers realise this. Certainly it is a grand and ambitious effort on the part of an unskilled group, of whom one expects much more later on.

One must also mention among films with studio sequences in England *The Voice of Ireland* (Victor Haddick), an immense sort of fiction travelogue which, they say, did well in Philadelphia, and *The Luck of the Irish* (Donovan Pedelty), a "quickie." *Riders to the Sea*, the film of John Synge's Aran Island play, filmed without a visit to the Aran Islands, has just been shown in Dublin. We sucked our teeth—but in the West they laughed openly.

There have been many travelogues of varying degrees of sentimentality, and sub-standard cinema is represented by *By Accident* (Davidson) and *Guests of the Nation* (Denis Johnston). This film is the best piece of sub-standard fiction the writer has seen. It is well-directed, well-cut and well-photographed, with none of the ridiculously pretentious sequences of most amateur films.

"Man of Aran"

Denis Johnston has handled Frank O'Connor's story with a restraint and confidence worthy of something better than 16 mm. Made on standard stock and provided with a musical accompaniment, it would have been certain of a showing in, at least, England's *Salles spécialisées*. Indeed, it would be well for directors to remember some of the pictures which, made as silents, were released with a superb sound-accompaniment—far better than the average cinema orchestra could have given them. To-day it is only certain documentaries which realise the value of a sound which is apart from the purely labial.

That is a brief survey of the Irish cinema: crashing failures, foreign impertinences, triumphs. But this year sees the birth of the true Irish cinema. Already the Great Southern Railway's Film Unit has turned out *Serving a Nation* and the Irish Tourist Association has established a unit which has the object of refraining from hurling the lakes and fells into the face of the possible tourist in monotonous succession. It intends, rather, to show a little of those whose lives depend upon the fruitfulness of the sea, the richness of the turf-bog and the productivity of the fields. with the lakes and fells taking (if relevant) their lovely place in the background; publicity by implication, not declamation.

But, as Liam ua Laoghaire, film-critic of the new paper *Ireland To-Day*, has said: "It must not be sufficient for Irishmen that a film has been made in Ireland, it must be a good film as well." That is a quotation from memory which I am sure its author will pardon me, but it is the spirit of the Irish cinema to-day. The marvel of a film being Irish is over: now for the job of regularly turning out good Irish films. It can be done. What is more, it is going to be done.

"Man of Aran"

Just a Comic—Huh?

Edward Everett Horton Talks to Denis Myers

MR. EDWARD EVERETT HORTON picked his way through the studio, around cameras, over cables, over the bare legs of a script girl, the 3 /11 legs of dressers, the 10 /6 legs of a "stand-in," and the baggy disreputable legs of Director Mr. Maurice Elvey.

Mr. Horton peered at me. "It's mighty nice of you to come," he said. "but you'll have to excuse me for a few minutes. I've got to see a woman off the premises——"

He bent forward with that apprehensive manner his fans know so well. "——Got to get rid of her somehow," he whispered confidentially.

"Sit down here." He pointed to a chair on which, in large white letters, was painted *Mr. E. Everett Horton.*

"That's my chair," he explained.

I sat down gingerly.

"It's all right," said Horton, "nobody will mistake you for me, don't be alarmed. I usually sit in Mr. Elvey's chair, but——" he sighed, "it doesn't do any good. They know I'm only Horton.

"Now, excuse me, please. I really must go and get rid of this woman. Come along and watch me do it, if you like."

And he bustled back to get rid of "this woman" on the set—Ursula Jeans, blonde and beautiful, smiling alcoholically, and cuddling an empty champagne bottle.

They shot the scene.

Mr. Horton came out round the legs again.

"Maurice," said Ursula (quite soberly), "could we go through that again?"

"Excuse me," said Mr. Horton. "I'll just get rid of this woman again, then we'll talk."

He went back round the legs, smiling.

"Will you take your look?," said Mr. Elvey.

Mr. Horton didn't take his look. It was already there, the plaintive Horton look, off stage as on.

But he thrust his head close to Ursula's.

They shot the scene.

Mr. Horton came out, round the legs.

"Maurice," said Ursula . . .

"Excuse me," said Mr. Horton. "Mighty nice of you to wait. I'll just go and . . ."

He was still smiling as he went back (round the legs).

No temperamental business about Edward Everett Horton. That's one of the secrets of his popularity in the studios.

He takes his work seriously, but not himself. He's continually and genuinely surprised at his success.

And he doesn't mind how many times he does a thing so long as everyone is satisfied.

They shot the scene again.

"Cut!" said Mr. Elvey.

"Maurice . . ." said Ursula.

"Booful," said Mr. Elvey, with finality.

Horton came back once more—round the legs.

"Now we can talk," he said. "Come into my little room."

He wrapped a heavy coat round him, and, as I followed him into the dressing room, switched on the electric fire.

Outside the summer sun, for once, blazed down.

"Well," said Horton, shivering, "it's not so bad having to work on the set when the weather's like this.

"Not as though it was a beautiful day outside and you were wishing to be out of doors, playing tennis, or 'antiquing'——

"I er——er——collect antiques, you know," he explained apologetically. "Silly, isn't it? But I've no brains anyway—just a comic, huh? But I'm mighty glad you came along. . . .

The above caricature of Horton is by Oscar Berger, the internationally known artist who has recently adopted London as his centre. He has been responsible for hundreds of caricatures of famous men, among them Edison, Ford, Bernard Shaw and Briand.

"You know, it's a treat to meet someone who doesn't want just the ordinary fan interview. Though I'd have liked to tell you about my ranch way out from Los Angeles. It's a great place. And I keep pulling down bits and building up new ones. Sort of a hobby.

"But——" the Horton eyebrows went up, "when I went on the set just now I was so worried trying to figure out something intelligent to tell you, I forgot to worry whether I was going to go through my scene right.

"So I was probably much better——almost get by, huh?

"The first time you play a comedy scene," he went on, "everything's fine. You get a little laugh, maybe, from someone—say, the cameraman, or Mr. Elvey, and you say to yourself—oh, maybe a bit surprised—well, that's the way to do it. Looks like they knew what they were doing when they booked you.

"The second time you get a faint snicker, and you think—well, maybe you weren't so good that time, but you'll get along.

"And the third time you do it you wait for the laugh that doesn't come, and you think—poor sap, what did they want to cast him in this part for!"

"You must miss your audiences," I said. "Don't you ever want to go back to the stage?"

For in the old days Horton ran a stock company in Los Angeles, and a visit to the city wasn't complete without taking in a Horton show.

"Well, if I could get enough London or Broadway successes to run a season at my theatre, I would," he told me.

"But I can't get the plays. You see, each one would only stand four weeks at good business. You can't get enough to last out a season long enough to make it worth while.

"I like to buy all the clothes for my cast," he

said apologetically, "and I often used to use real antiques to dress a production properly. The antiques I collect, I mean, not human ones.

"Yes, I'd like to go back to it. But just to show off? No, sir. It'd have to be worth while.

"But don't you go believing all those newspaper stories about the huge salaries I'm getting.

"If I were getting what the papers say, I'd work two weeks in the year—not all the year round, with broadcasting thrown in."

I asked this comedy specialist if he didn't find it hard to adapt himself from American to English ideas of humour, and *vice versa*.

He shook his head.

"I'll tell you about that," said Horton, warming his hands at the electric fire, while I mopped my forehead.

"The first time I came here was to play in *The Private Secretary*—a typically English part.

"When they offered it me, I thought they were crazy. I said 'No.'

"But they insisted, so over I came, prepared to die in the effort to be British.

"But they didn't want me to be—just told me to go ahead and be my fool self—and I've been over here four times since then—each time by invitation.

"Maybe," he said earnestly, "that's what's wrong with British pictures? If there is anything wrong with them."

"Perhaps what's wrong is that they let you go back," I said.

"Well—no one's thrown anything—yet," said Horton. "But you never know, do you?

"Studios? Why, they're just like home. Crossing the Atlantic doesn't seem to make any difference, you feel you're just going from one Hollywood studio to another.

"Yours are equal to the best we've got—must have cost a mint of money. . . .

"You know," he frowned, "I wonder if the movie business is like the restaurant business?

"I was driving down Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles once, and I saw one of those swell new restaurants—cost a fortune to set up—it was just opening.

"The next time I saw it, it was for rent.

"Someone was going to take it, and go broke, too, and then a third man would come along and make a fortune out of it.

"Maybe the movie business is like that—it's the third man who'll make the money?

"But that's just an idea. Don't you mind what I say. I'm no finance expert.

"Why, after they started putting me in silent pictures they had to invent the talkies to get their money back.

"And still they book me. You don't think it's my beauty, do you?

"No,"——he nodded his head, "I thought not. I guess it's just that the public likes to see a dumb guy like the fellow round the corner, on the screen.

"And I've got another idea, too," he said. "They shouldn't put me in big leading parts. That's a mistake.

"People don't want to laugh right through a picture—they want a bit of romance.

"When a fool guy like me falls in love they just laugh again. It's pathetic, it's funny, but it's not romantic.

"I'd rather they saw me in little bits in the picture—that is, little bits of the picture, not me in bits——

"Then they'd go away thinking they'd like to have seen a bit more of that fool chap . . .

"I'm so used to playing those parts that nobody else will take," he added sadly.

"And what does make people laugh? That's a very serious subject, and you can't generalise.

"Now, if I sit down on my hat, lots of people will laugh.

"But my dear old mother—she's Scottish, you know—she'd say: 'Edward, what's funny in ruining a perfectly good hat?'

"It's just a matter of opinion, isn't it?"

I asked Horton if he ever wrote lines of his own in his parts.

"Oh, well," he said humbly, "every comic thinks he's got a good gag now and then. And he puts it in, and the director says sorrowfully, 'No, old man, no, cut that out.'

"So——" (shrug) "it's out. Maybe it wasn't such a good idea. After all the director's the boss. I just do as I'm told."

The door opened. Head of Mr. Maurice Elvey appeared.

"Like the afternoon off?"

Horton thought this over.

"Maybe I could do a bit of antiquing round Watford, or a game of tennis," he ruminated. "Get warmed up, huh?"

I thought longingly of cool shade and iced drinks.

"Maurice . . ." said the voice of Ursula Jeans.

Mr. Edward Everett Horton's head bobbed towards me.

"Excuse me," he said, "I must just go and get rid of this woman again. Maybe I'll be really good this time?"

Mr. Elvey nodded. I nodded.

"Mighty nice of you to come," murmured Mr. Horton.

Still smiling, he wound his way once more through the maze of outstretched legs on to one of the sets of the *Man in the Mirror*.

And Edward Everett Horton, actor, fine art dealer, amateur historian, antiquarian, horticulturist, bachelor and home-lover, went on to the set to become Edward Everett Horton.

Meetings and Acquaintances

WOHL and CEKALSKI, two young Polish documentary directors (see *W.F.N.*, August issue), at present in England with four of their productions in the hopes of getting distribution, have been making shorts about London for the Polish market. Wohl, a serious and bespectacled young man, says Polish interest is in old-world aspects of London as represented by Beefeaters and Westminster Abbey, and has been shooting accordingly. Has leaning towards the impressionist technique and is a master of camera angle. Wohl and Cekalski take cutting very seriously. Their colleague Ford even more so. The results are fine.

FELIX FELTON specialises in historical actuality programmes for B.B.C. Productions to date include *Sedgemoor*, *de Quincey* and *Sicilian Expedition*. Felton appropriately hails from Balliol, loves research, spends incalculable pains on production, and recently established a world record by having Greek recited on the National wavelength on a Saturday evening. At present working on a radio adaptation of *Episode* (American version of *Maskerade*) which he claims is going to be great fun. In his spare time Felton plays the piano and composes; hence the well-chosen music in his productions.

LEO JOANNON, young French director, began ten years ago in the studios, as an assistant editor. Now he is 32 and has a reputation. He made a successful picture with Danielle Darrieux and Pierre Renoir, and afterwards the film *Quand Minuit Sonnera*. Now he is busy on *L'Homme sans Coeur*. He believes that making films is a mere question of practice. The only thing a director has got to do is to learn to avoid making the same mistakes twice. If he continues to improve, he will soon be recognised as one of the world's best directors.

DR. FRIEDRICH DALSHEIM, German director of documentary pictures. Produced with the late Dr. Rasmussen *Bali, Isle of Demons; Palo's Wedding*. Lived in the East Indies a long time and refused to enter the commercial field. Hates to see his photograph in the papers and only feels happy when unshaven.

ANDRE THIRIFAYS, energetic organiser of the Club de l'Ecran in Brussels, is now planning nation-wide activities in Belgium. Thirifays has crusaded in specialised film shows for Brussels public with increasing success, and can point with pride to twice-nightly houses. Admires contemporary British production. Is young, but looks even younger, and is rivalled in this by his intelligent wife. Represents the best side of progressive thought in Belgium. He is also a first-class journalist. Hopes, with Storck, to put independent production in Belgium on a paying basis.

SASCHA GUITRY, who believes himself to be the uncrowned king of the French theatre. Last year wrote the witty play *Nouveau Testament*, with a number of puns and French jokes on marriage, thrown into the cocktail of routine . . . It brought credit to the French theatre, both at home and abroad. A charming comedy—that became tragedy as soon as Tobis bought the play, intending to film it. A film was made. Sascha wrote the scenario and directed production. If he could have done the camerawork, no doubt he would. This last was impossible, so he had to content himself with the leading role . . . .

Each theatrical scene was replayed in the sound stages. Like a machine-gun, the dialogue rattled into the ears of the audience. An exact copy of the play on celluloid. The only thing the audience missed badly was the falling of the curtain after each act, to give a moment for a cup of coffee . . .

JEAN BENOIT-LÉVY, director of *La Maternelle*, has been responsible for a large number of educational and scientific films, and in 1922 produced a documentary on Louis Pasteur, very different from the recent romanticised versions with Paul Muni and Sascha Guitry.

Benoit-Lévy has made films for the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Naval Affairs; biological, scientific and medical films; and films of vocational guidance, industry and travel. His educational films are produced by his own company *Les Films Benoit-Lévy*.

He is now working with Marie Epstein on the film *Helène Vilfur* and the treatment is similar to that of *La Maternelle*. Madeleine Renaud is playing the principal part.

MEXICO CHALLENGES EUROPE

By Winifred Holmes

From "Pescados" (Paul Strand)

TWENTY-ONE MEXICAN films were released in the U.S.A. during 1934 to Britain's thirty-three! And France's ten! Mexico, whom many of us have looked at only through the eyes of Eisenstein and D. H. Lawrence, seeing its incredible beauty and ancientness—peons, cactii, mules, adobe houses, folk dances, play of clean-cut light and shade—are unaware of this gage of rivalry she is casting at Europe's film industries. No one has yet, except perhaps in fits of midsummer madness, dreamed of rivalling Hollywood's commercial magnitude; but there is no doubt that Mexico has her eye on Europe, and is fully alive to the possiblities of the cinema as a national source of wealth.

Urban Mexico is entirely 20th century, and American rather than Spanish in atmosphere. Her businesses are modelled on U.S. lines; her standards of comfort and modernity are identical to those of her great neighbour. She believes in the go-getting of to-day of the New World rather than the *mañana* of her mother-country in the Old. It is not surprising therefore that she should want to snatch a share of the cinema's spoils from other nations.

There are about twenty film-producing companies of purely national origin. Nearly all are in Mexico City. Mexican actors are employed and Mexican technicians. The films produced are not yet up to Hollywood's standards of slickness, but

are good enough to be widely distributed in the U.S. and in Spain, and they are much appreciated in the country of their origin.

The industry is young, a growth of the last five years, and its films have a quality of *nationality* which is exciting and holds out promise of great things to come if the disease of imitativeness does not set in.

Spain has been, up to the present unhappy time, her best customer. Spaniards understand her language and love to see her scenery, history and customs on the screen. Mexico is a living proof of Spain's conquistadoring past, and she is looked on with benevolent parental pride. The civil war is bound to disorganise Spanish industry for some time. Mexican producers will therefore have still greater opportunities of supplying the market as there will be little film production in Spain while the disorganisation lasts.

"Mexico for the Mexicans!" Nationalism is rampant in Mexico and her films reflect this ideal. "Maximilian and Carlota" retells the tragic story of one of the most tragic royal couples in history, with great dignity and sensitiveness. It begins with the landing of the Emperor Maximilian and his lovely young bride, to follow them through the shortest of reigns to the doom of revolution and execution.

An English correspondent from Mexico City writes: "The best Mexican film so far is *Janizio*, produced by Luis Marques. It tells the legend of the little island of that name in Lake Patzcuaro and has a number of beautiful shots of Mexican types and scenery . . . " *Mater Nostra* he considers "competent," but *Más Allá de la Muerte* (Beyond Death) the most "incompetent" film he's ever seen (and he saw the first efforts of both Greece and Portugal). "Both are undistinguished in theme, and are spoilt by excessive sentimentality of a Latin rather than Anglo-Saxon type."

Marihuana is a propaganda film against a Mexican drug which is used a great deal and accounts for most of the many crimes of violence. *Vamonos con Pancho Villa* (Let's go with Pancho Villa) is announced to be shown shortly. "It remains to be seen how it compares with *Viva Villa*, the historical inaccuracies of which are unfavourably commented upon here."

It is a significant fact that the Government assists the industry. Probably other films of nationally imporant propaganda like *Marihuana* will be produced in the future.

But this is Mexico of the big cities—Mexico City, Guadalajara, Guaymas, Monterrey—cities peopled by whites or aristocratic Spanish blood, Mexicans proper, and a mixture of Europeans, Americans and mestizos.

Away under the shadow of the immense volcanoes, Orizaba, Popocatepetl, Ixtacchuatil, in the rural districts, are the Indians and the Indianised half-breeds, living a life that is a mixture of ancient Aztec custom and of the 14th century. Priest-ridden, desperately poor, illiterate, the cinema means little or nothing to them. They must take what they can get—if anything. They may provide the most wonderful material for films, but that is about all the contact they have with modernity—except exploitation.

John Dos Passos writes of this division of rural and urban people . . . "Fifteen million Mexicans against a hundred-and-twenty millions; of those fifteen million perhaps five hundred thousand are vagabonds, without visible means of support, two million are wild Indians in the hills. Ten million Mexican peasants and workmen, disunited, confused by political rows, sleeping on a straw mat on the floor, eating a few tortillas a day and a speck of chile to take away the raw taste of the corn, standing up in their fields against the Catholic Church, against the two world-groups of petroleum interests, against the inconceivably powerful financial juggernaut of the Colossus of the North . . . are you on the side of the silent dark man (he has lice, he drinks too much pulque when he can get it, he has spasms of ferocious cruelty), Juan Sin Tierra, with eyes on the ground . . . "

Politics in Mexico rouse such passions; parties go up or down so rapidly, that there is seldom time, given the inclination, for a particular government to prevent this exploitation. The peons in their picturesqueness and backwardness provide superb opportunities for the cinema—not to speak of the marvellously clear sunny atmosphere and grand scenery.

For instance there is the story of the old Indian who started a coffee plantation with great labour and unceasing care. The trees to shade the coffee have to be just the right height and thickness . . . the sapling coffee trees take from five to seven years to bear . . . then there is the coffee fly

which breeds in the streams and ditches and causes sickness and blindness among the people. . . . All this the old Indian surmounted, then along came a man who understood commercial enterprises and thought the plantation too fine to be left in the hands of a lazy illiterate Indian. . . . He went to court and won title to the land . . . That night the old Indian and his family crept out and hacked down every single coffee tree . . . .

Luis Marques has shown in his *Janizio* and his shorts of rural life that he is a true artist and is not only sensitive to his country and people, but has the ability to bring them unspoiled to the screen.

Shorts have a growing market in Mexican cities, and there is at least one News-Theatre of the Tatler type in the capital. An English amateur, Harold Fletcher, is making excellent 16 mm. shorts of Indian markets, fiestas and traditional dances such as the sensational flying dances of the Otomi and Totonac Indians. My Mexican correspondent, who is also an expert on folk dances and music, praises them highly.

Most outstanding of the recent films from the Mexican studios is *Enemigos*, a Spanish-speaking film made by Alex Phillips. Phillips is a photographer who worked with Eisenstein in the filming of *Que Viva Mexico* ("Thunder over Mexico"). An 'associate of the mighty Eisenstein' as he was attractively called on the billings in Santa Fé, his work reveals a few qualities, chief among which is the pictorial, that mark his master's films. The landscapes, cloud effects over the Mexican desert, the natural characters including the women camp-followers and tortilla-makers, are outstandingly photographed with perhaps a conscious accentuation of light and shade.

The theme, that of the rebel peons in their conflict with the government soldiers, should have provided great opportunities but, especially in the fighting sequences, they are never quite realised. The theme is harnessed to a story of the wife of the captain of the government forces who, after the temporary occupation in the town of the rebels, becomes the mistress of their leader. The attempt to handle this psychologically never conceals the usual triangle formation. One outstanding sequence—the rebels are cut off from all water in the baking desert and then, after the capture of the hacienda, they throw themselves into the acequia, burying their faces in the water and catching up drinks in their tremendous sombreros—has a strong emotional power embued by the natural intensity of the incident. Technically the standard is high though the sound accompaniment is not always comprehensible in its symbolism.

As a whole the film is made on conventional lines with little discernible use of Eisenstein's technique. The film has not yet been publicly shown throughout America or England.

What of foreign films? American films entered Mexico practically at the time they were first produced, and have kept their stranglehold fairly completely till now. They had at first a pernicious moral effect in their glorification of violence and crime on a naturally passionate people.

If not a monopoly, Hollywood has at least a 75 per cent preference. Moreover, European films are more costly: positive copies are 80 per cent more than American ones. Last year, however, the American distributors boycotted Mexico, to try and get the excessive taxation reduced. This turned sentiment away from the U.S. towards Europe, and many British, French, German and Spanish films were shown at the super-cinemas.

The Alameda super-cinema opened a few months ago, after the American "strike" came to an end, and has shown *Modern Times*. The Rex opened still more recently with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Among English films shown lately in Mexico City are :—*The Private Life of Henry VIII, The Ghost Goes West, The Scarlet Pimpernel, The* 39 *Steps, Richelieu, The Clairvoyant, The Invisible Man, Sanders of the River, Jew Suss*.

A list of the principal Mexican producing companies is below :—

Aguila Film: Avenida Juárez 18, México D.F.

Asociacion de Productores Mexicanos de Peliculas: Avenida Uruguay 37, 1 er. pisco México, D.F.

Aspa Films (Juan Orol Garcia): Gante No. 8, Desp. 46, México D.F.

Cinematografica Mexicana S.A.: Avenida Uruguay No. 54, México D.F.

Cia. Impulsora Cinematografica S.A.: Balderas No. 27, México D.F.

Cia. Nacional Productora de Peliculas S.A.: Paseo de la Reforma 515, México D.F.

Films Exchange S.A.: Avenida Uruguay 37, 1 er. piso México D.F.

Hispano Mexicana Cinematografica S.A.: Avenida Uruguay 44, 1 er. piso México D.F.

"La Mexicana" Cia. Elaboradora de Peliculas: Isabel la Catòlica 30, Desps. 303 y 304, México D.F.

"Mexico Films" (Jorge Stahal): F. Montes de Oca No. 117, México D.F.

Industrial Cinematografica S.A.: Lomas de Chapultepec, Mexico D.F.

Peliculas Familiares: Gante 1, Desp. 111, México D.F.

Productores Duquesa Olga: Uruguay 35, Desp. 601, México D.F.

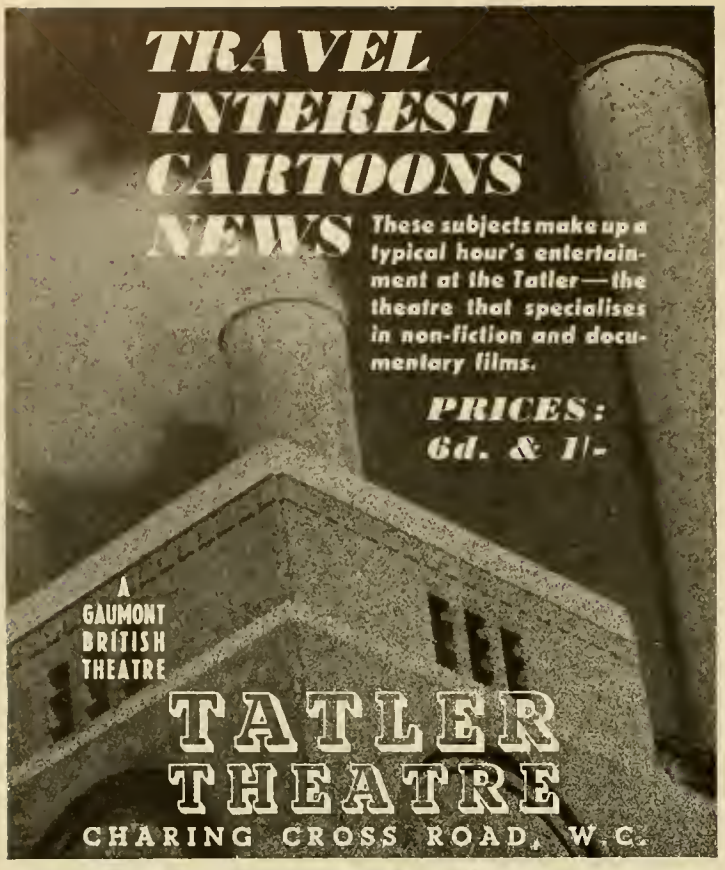
Wise Censorship Essential for India

says Sir George Dunbar

"How intensely interesting was the informative and vivid article by Winifred Holmes on *Indian Film Progress* which appeared in your September number," says Sir George Dunbar, author of *The History of India* (Nicholson and Watson).

"A film to be successful in India cannot follow British—still less Hollywood—standards. The innate conservatism of Indian nationalism holds to the dramatic conventions of the Golden Age, fifteen hundred years ago, when Kalidas wrote his deathless drama. As Mrs. Holmes also points out there is no long-standing Moslem dramatic tradition. Until the nineteenth century, no Mohammedan wrote what a Gupta or a Tudor audience would have called a play. Yet, oddly enough, Moslems in the past threw their drama on the back of the screen in their popular shadow-plays. Instead of the theatre there were Moslem forerunners of A. J. Alan, who broadcast their stories Kailungwise in the streets, and it is probable that the 'Arabian Nights' were first told in the Indian bazaars.

"The howlers perpetrated by Western film-producers when dealing with Indian subjects would not appeal to a Bengali villager seeing a travelling cinema show. Nor would the Friday afternoon matinees for the benefit of the trans-border tribesmen have a civilising influence if some of the films seen in this country were shown in Peshawar city. In India a wise censorship is absolutely necessary, more especially for religious and racial reasons. In this matter there is much virtue in the Swadeshi slogan 'Indian-made Films for India'; and it is hoped that the suggestion made by the Indian Cinematograph Committee in 1928, that scholarships should be founded in India for learning the technique of the industry abroad, may be substantially followed up."



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WERE VENICE AWARDS POLITICAL?

VENICE 1936 has just held an International Film Exhibition and an International Political Situation as well.

There is no public as impartially critical of art as the Italian, and no country as unable at present—politically speaking—to be impartial in its awards of merit, as Italy. An ironic situation which governed the proceedings of the competition.

Prizes this year went chiefly to Germany—Dr. Goebbels himself attended at Venice. France must not feel overlooked; the second largest proportion went to her. England? Sanctions may be dead, but there is still a certain amount of political feeling; many English producers kept away altogether from the Exhibition rather than have a minority of awards. But English film work is good, and England must be shown. There is no real ill-feeling—she is therefore awarded prizes. America carried off most awards last year; this year she got few. American popular feeling against the Ethiopian conquest was not altogether blameless in the matter.

This is not to say that poor films won prizes. Only that among several meritorious ones, the final decision rested on politics rather than on fine points of technique. Rome must approve the awards.

Judges on the Committee are 50 per cent Italian and 50 per cent foreigners—a far higher proportion of Italians than of any other country. Italian judges are chosen for their critical ability. The most eminent is Sacchi of Italy's greatest newspaper *The Corriére della Séra*. The Ministry of Propaganda is represented also.

About four thousand people attending the Exhibition can be seated in the theatre, and are shown all the entries. These they approve or not as the case may be, but the Committee does the judging. Italian producers are not pleased by this. Local films are not yet up to International standard, and seen in comparison with the best of the year's choice from abroad, suffer in consequence.

They are given a complete set of prizes on their own—there is an Italian class and a foreign one. For both the highest awards are a Mussolini cup. So far Italian producers are gratified and encouraged. But—here's the rub—foreign films exhibited kill local products. Native critical faculty and impartiality applaud good stuff of whatever nationality; hiss at bad. Critics criticise it in their columns—the films are given the bird before they even reach the rest of Italy.

> Great Britain need have no qualms in accepting the prizes that came to the industry. For camerawork M. Greenbaum's reward was well justified; the medals for *Scrooge* and *Robber Symphony* were well deserved and G.B.I.'s medal for Holmes' documentary film *The Mine* could have been given to no better picture from Britain.

A correspondent writes:

"The cankerworm gnawing at the heart of Venice is betrayed by the programme of the Biennale, the distribution of the prizes, and numerous little scandals. The most notorious example is the treatment of the film *Janosik*, which had to be cut out of the programme because of the objections from the Hungarians, who felt affronted by a film describing the revolt of Slovakians against the tyranny of the Magyars, probably at the beginning of the 18th century. However, at the request of the Czechoslovakian representatives, it was decided to show the film after all—without previous announcement, as it was already boycotted in the German and Italian press."

FILM SCHOOL

It has been made clear that there is a widespread demand for knowledge of modern film-making problems and technique. The most practical way of satisfying this need lies in the foundation of an inexpensive but comprehensive film school.

W.F.N. *is therefore glad to announce its co-operation with the Film School of Film Group in arranging a course of classes, lectures and film-shows during the coming Winter.*

The syllabus will include weekly classes conducted by experts on Scenario and Treatment, Script, Set Design and Construction, Direction, Camerawork, Lighting, Sound, Editing, Trickwork, etc. The classes will be accompanied by films. Lectures by celebrated film-makers will deal with more general production trends.

The course will last sixteen weeks. All sessions will be held in the evenings.

The Classes will start in November, and the subscription for the Course is two guineas. Apply at once to The Secretary, Group Theatre Rooms, 9 Great Newport Street, W.C.2, or to World Film News, 9 *Oxford Street, W.1. The director of the school is Basil Wright and all the important cinema lecturers will take part.*

Tribute to Thalberg

By Michael Balcon

To write a fitting appreciation of Irving Thalberg, I feel that one should have been a great and intimate friend of his. This, unfortunately, I was not. I knew Thalberg, it is true, but chiefly by his work. But even this slight acquaintance was sufficient to convince me of one thing: his superb qualities as a film-maker. Irving Thalberg strove always to maintain the status, not of a mere film financier, but of a professional producer. He was the perfect example of a man who, while remaining completely loyal to his commercial obligations, made it his business to produce ideas, and personally to see his ideas and ideals carried into effect. Here was no ordinary impresario, showman or business man—though he possessed in generous measure the qualities of all three—but a sincere craftsman who made films and made them well.

As I have said, my acquaintance with Irving Thalberg was not intimate, yet each one of our meetings was a keen pleasure to me. I first met him in London, with his charming and gifted wife Norma Shearer; next, at a M.G.M. luncheon in Hollywood, where I sat next to him. I remember that on that occasion I said to him, "Mr. Thalberg, you are making the best British films in the world to-day!" I was thinking, of course, of *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*. It was in such magnificent productions as these that the international mind of the man showed itself to the full; the artist in him emerged, yet by the magnitude of the projects he showed himself a man who could control vast outputs of money and thought, and control them splendidly. He it was who inaugurated, as a means of his own self-expression, a policy of fewer but finer films, typified by such masterpieces as I have mentioned.

But above all, I shall remember Irving Thalberg for his kindliness and understanding. When he heard that I was about to produce *Rhodes of Africa*, in spite of the fact that he himself had spent much time and money on preparations for a similar subject, he withdrew, courteously and graciously, leaving the field clear for the G.B. picture. Later, he saw our *Tudor Rose*; and the following week I received a letter of appreciation from him which demonstrated once more the interest and enthusiasm he had for the work of others besides himself.

This is a very small tribute to a master-craftsman. All of us who work in films may be said, in a sense, merely to be writing in sand; but the memory of Irving Thalberg will endure long after the seas of Time have washed out our most fretful efforts.

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NAZI FILMS AVOID MODERN PROBLEMS

Producers Play Safe, says Walter J. Moss

AS A PILGRIM I went to Germany—the birthplace of *Caligari*, *Warning Shadows*, *The Crisis*, *Metropolis* and all the others. To me the U.F.A. diamond was a magic sign to be held in great respect as the symbol of a tradition that has produced the greatest series of pictures ever made.

I knew that many, and some of the most famous men who had built that tradition, were now scattered throughout the studios of the world, but I felt that with such a heritage and with a film public that had been raised to such a high level of intellectual appreciation, new men must be carrying on the tradition.

I was disappointed.

Without decrying the present German cinema—the fact remains that where I had expected at least an occasional masterpiece I found an industry ridden with commercialism and the monotonous routine of *stars*, *fan-mail*, *box-office*.

In Germany today by far the greater proportion of the films exhibited are home produced. The balance is made up of the inevitable Hollywood attractions (dubbed, or merely titled), a gratifying sprinkling of English films, some Viennese productions and an assortment of very ancient pictures from the rest of Europe.

For various reasons—the import quota being among the first—many of the best productions from the outside world never get a showing or appear only at the first-run Berlin houses. The language difficulty may have something to do with it, but perhaps these outside films are not considered suitable for German audiences. Whatever the reasons, the opportunities of comparing German and foreign films are becoming less frequent, especially in the provinces, and because of it the German industry is in grave danger of becoming smug and contented with its own handiwork. Lethargy of this kind cannot be put down to a system of government only. When talkies arrived in Germany there was such difficulty over the export question that *safe bets* for home consumption became the rule, and at the time of Germany's greatest financial troubles money was often available only for cast-iron successes. Thus came a halt to most experiment.

With the coming of the National Socialist régime there seemed to be an opportunity of righting this and indeed perhaps a transformation may yet take place. But the guaranteed state assistance of approved pictures seems to have been taken as a blessing on the prevailing spirit of contentment rather than as an impetus and opportunity of carrying on the worthwhile work that had gone before the economic crisis.

The standard of production is not actually declining, but certainly the films are no better and they are to a large extent rehashings of past successes on politically innocuous themes.

This fear of making an "unacceptable" picture has produced a very interesting result, for in their timidity the producers seem to be playing safe by concentrating on subjects and themes as far removed from contemporary German life as possible. Of the pictures I saw, the greater majority are either *costume* or *foreign setting*, and in both groups a preference for Tzarist Russian subjects predominates.

To name only a few of the more recent *big hits* and analyse their subjects and period:—

Emil Jannings in "Traumulus"

Schwarze Rozen.—(Lilian Harvey in box office record-breaker). Pre-war Russia with a sprinkling of Finnish nationalism, anti-Tzarist, anti-Imperialist.

Kurier des Zaren.—(In other words "Michael Strogoff"). Very pre-war Russia, pro-Tzarist, Imperialist.

Mazurka.—(The Pola Negri comeback). This begins and ends in a modern law court of vague nationality, but for the greater part it slips into the security of pre-war and war-time Poland.

I suppose that, given a sufficiently elastic viewpoint, these three films could be considered as conveying a similar "approved" idealism.

Liebesleute.—(Renate Muller in a Janet Gaynor story). Modern romance with flavouring of country family estate.

Traumulus.—(Jannings—very Jannings). Pre-war German university town, period vague, and the disillusionment of the old professor.

Donogoo Tonka.—Sparkling modern fantasy, but in Paris and South America.

Stenka Rasin.—More old Russia.

Soldaten-Kameraden.—Modern German military comedy.

Bettelstudent and *Boccaccio.*—Both *very* costume.—Clarkson Raynes.

This list is merely a random selection from recent product, but as examples of subject-matter it is typical. Apart from the reason of timidity I can find no other explanation.

Present-day Germany is teeming with film subjects, both in Nazi happenings and in ordinary life, but producers are either fighting shy of them or have been warned off. I hardly think the latter is the case by reason of Dr. Goebbels' pronouncements on the necessity for a virile and contemporary cinema—yet in only one case, the comedy *Krach im Hinterhaus*, have I heard of a character saying "Heil Hitler!" or showing in any way that Germans *are* living in a National Socialist state. Apart from newsreel and propaganda films I have never seen a Swastika flag in

"Fähnrmann Maria"

Nazi Films—cont.

a picture, and it is not surprising in view of this evasion of contemporary reality that the German finds himself more in sympathy with, and able to understand the characters of an alien film *It Happened One Night*, than those of Auguste der Starke, *Liselotte v. dem Pfalz*, or any of the others.

If Dr. Goebbels' famous "points" for film producers were observed properly, and acted upon constructively, nothing but an improvement could come of them, while as a basic policy for an intelligent and artistic unit they might well be the beginning of a German film revival which would be as typical and revolutionary in its own way as the Russian film has been to the Soviet.

The Staatstheaters have shown that National Socialism is not necessarily anti-artistic, and that creative, intelligent and often very beautiful work is just as possible under a Nazi government as any other.

The technicians are there, the artists are there. A constructive programme and organisation to carry on the policy is all that is needed. In the meantime we must be thankful for the few films whose merits have produced satisfying and coherent result out of the prevailing welter of "no place, no time, no story" scenarios.

Savoy Hotel 217 is an example of a film that has managed to emerge from these difficulties. Wagner, whose camerawork may be remembered in *Dreigroschenoper*, *Kameradschaft*, *M*, etc., is one of the few stalwarts remaining from the old U.F.A. tradition, and he has distinguished this and many of the less exciting recent films by his artistry.

Fährmann Maria, a film directed by Frank Wysbar, was the only *advanced* film I saw in Germany. Although by no means a masterpiece, for it was often handicapped by very ordinary photography, it did try to tell its simple story by means of *film*, and its use of music, sound and pictorial effects was definitely imaginative.

If Germany had been responsible for more films of this kind one would have a good deal more faith in the future of the progressive German cinema.

Museum of Modern Art Combs Europe for Films

Miss Iris Barry and John E. Abbott have recently gone back to New York after a film-hunting expedition in Europe for the Film Library of the Museum of Modern Art. Their object was to find films that could be used in compiling their next two years' programmes on the history of the cinema.

Paris, Berlin, Warsaw, Moscow, Leningrad, Stockholm and London were their chief centres of exploration.

Among the principal finds were several early German and Swedish films including films of Victor Seastrom and Mauritz Stiller. Among these were *Gosta Berling*, *Phantom Chariot* and a fourteen-reel version of *Charles XII*. An extremely interesting film they secured was a film document of the 18th century Drottningholm theatre in Stockholm.

In Berlin they acquired 22 feature films including *Caligari*, *The Love of Jeanne*, *Ney*, *The Last Laugh*, *Variety* and some pre-war Italian films.

Early Soviet films were selected for classification along with examples of the little-known pre-revolutionary Russian work. Among these were *Dorian Grey*, *Anna Karenina* and *The Cloak*, a film made by the directors of *The Youth of Maxim* and also Pudovkin's *Chess Fever*. From France they obtained *The Beggar's Opera*, *Kameradschaft*, *M.*, *Thérèse Roquin* and *The White Hell of Pitz Paul*, as well as a very nearly complete record of the entire avant-garde movement in the French cinema: from Warsaw, Pola Negri's first film.

Film excursions in London yielded unfortunately only a few of the interesting early pictures. *Joyless Street*, the early Garbo film, *Mons* and *Murder* were among these. The Abbotts made their chief selection of British films from the documentaries.

Back in New York a 3 to 4 minute rolling title will be prepared for each film. This will give the grouping and the period of the film and will indicate what the student should look for. When the programmes are sent out, musical scores, either the original or a substitute, where that is unobtainable, will accompany them.

One of the future labours of the Museum will be to compile a dictionary of film in movie form. This will be technical as well as historical, and if properly drawn from the rich material already available in the Film Library, should be of incalculable value.

"Savoy Hotel"

The Youth of Maxim

The Youth of Maxim, a Lenfilm production, directed by Kozintzeff and Trauberg, must rank as one of the best achievements of the Soviet Cinema during recent years. The setting is pre-1917 and the story concerns a young factory worker Maxim, who becomes associated with the underground revolutionary movement. His development from class to positive political consciousness is traced against an authentic and realistic background of the time. The film moves swiftly and introduces a strong element of action and excitement in its atmosphere of illegal activities, strikes, and battles of wits with the police, through all of which Maxim gradually develops into the professional revolutionary.

Many of the sequences, especially the burial of a worker killed in a factory accident, are poignant and moving in the extreme.

Sound and photography are excellent and suggest a complete indentity of interest between the directors and the technicians concerned.

World Returning to Individualism?

ANDRE VIGNEAU, the well-known French writer, believes that the world is returning to individualism. In a recent article he says: "The railways made us believe in the collective transport of hundreds of individuals. Where are we to-day? In the two-seater, in a 'tourist' car, in the private or commercial aeroplane, on the autorail or in the autocar.

"The big orchestras are now heard at home, on the gramophone or on the radio. We group ourselves in the living-room around the wireless-set as we did formerly around the fire, eyes fixed on the flames, listening to the tales of the previous day.

"The world to-day belongs to everyone separately . . ."

Vigneau thinks that the cinema, which still appears as a type of "collective rejoicing," is revolving towards individualism at every forward step of television: "That is its most evident progress, and, in my opinion, its true route.

"Everyone will take his cinema pleasure in his own home and know, moment by moment, the important events of the whole world; the vedette will dance specially for each spectator, not only in the four corners of the world, but sitting alone and isolated from the rest of humanity.

"Work will, however, still be a collective refuge, for it will always be necessary for hundreds of engineers and workmen to make a car and technicians and artists to make a film."

AMERICA AT THE CROSS-

By Katharine Walker

AMERICA IS AT THE Cross-Roads. In November the people of the United States are facing an election of equal importance to the General Election of 1931. Their problems are much the same. Shall they return a Government of pronounced Labour sympathies, which is spending fabulous sums of present and future taxpayers' money, using the methods of dictatorship, and careering ahead with no stated programme? Or shall they change to a government of conservation tendency, which will balance the budget, though it mean immediate taxation—as against inflation—regulate Labour (now threatening serious strikes) and stick to an announced programme of relief?

The election is a safety valve letting off the steam of accumulated tension which the last six years have stored up. What direction that steam will take when released is another matter. But in a democracy, people must wait for their elections, local or federal, before they can express their dissatisfactions constructively. Between times their state of mind is plain to read in print—or on the screen.

Films are the most important reaction-mirrors. They are opiates, stimuli, escapes, or wish-fulfilments. And they are ideals and dreams—the tangible expression of the puzzled and inarticulate. So it will be revealing to follow the most important films of these last troubled years. We will get a reflection of the social, mental and moral metamorphosis leading up to this explosion point.

The Autumn of 1929 brought the shock of the Stock Market Crash.

People had been speculating universally with unfailing success. Everyone had made money, quantities of it, and was sure that he would always make more. The goose hung high. When the crash came, people were staggered. They were wiped out, but could hardly believe it. They still thought in terms of recent luxury. No longer able to afford the theatre, they went, when they could, to the movies.

Thus 1930–1931 saw the first musicals. Ziegfeld produced *Whoopee*, an extravaganee of sight and sound, taken from his show of the same name. He was told it wouldn't take, but it did Maurice Chevalier came out in *The Smiling Lieutenant* and made a hit. It was good showman-psychology. People had grown to take these super stage shows for granted, and were finding it hard to do without them. The pictures gave them the show, but at a more reasonable price. There were films like *Monte Carlo* and *Platinum Blonde* (the year following) which were pictures of the dear dead world of fabulous fortunes and riotous living.

It is easy to understand how these fundamentally childish people—a very young nation after all—found comfort at this time of disappointment in films like Chaplin's *City Lights* and Marie Dressler's *Min and Bill*. Here they saw misery which they could share, or pity, and philosophy which helped to heal some of their own sore places.

Or they found some of their old exultation in vicarious heroics. *Cimarron*, a vast panorama of pioneer triumphs on the Western frontiers, was one of the biggest films of the year 1931. And *Dawn Patrol*, with its breathless supremacy in the air, was an unforgettable success.

1930 and 1931, those first two years of hard adjustment to an unpleasant surprise, were unlike any others. The 1932 films—not many big successes, comparatively speaking, this last year of the Republican régime—showed reflections of the same mood: *What Price Hollywood*, *Glamour* with Constance Bennett, *One Hour with You*—music and romance with Chevalier and Jeanette MacDonald. And the very satisfactory story of a rich man who actually preferred to run a service station: George Arliss's *Millionaire* was one of the year's really big successes.

The Fall of 1932 saw a new régime in power—Roosevelt took office in March, 1933—and people had hopes for the country's desperate situation. The New Deal was going to set things right. And though the luxurious escapes like *Footlight Parade* and Eddie Cantor's extravagant *Kid from Spain* were popular hits, a new note crept in.

Grand Hotel, with its incredible cast of Stars and its first cousin, *Dinner at Eight*, equally rich in stellar talent, were box office triumphs. Their plot construction, as everyone knows, depends on the inter-relation of many peoples' lives and dramas. People throughout the country were thinking in just the same terms of interdependance. They realised that they must all pull together to save the country. The N.R.A. had just been hatched, regulating and standardising industry.

The power of Roosevelt's personality had reached from coast to coast. He was real, closer to people than screen and radio. Personality in a President was electrifying after the years of wooden-Indian men—Coolidge and Hoover. Personality, not just prosperity was now what made for success. And the screen reflected this in Mae West who brought *She Done Him Wrong* and *I'm No Angel* to delighted audiences.

A sombre note crept into the heroics, however. *King Kong*, the immense Gorilla who smashed people and cities had a darkly significant appeal. And even Walt Disney's *Three Little Pigs* was given a contemporary symbolism, and *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf* became a Depression Theme Song.

1934 was a record in film history for the

". . . some of their old exultation in vicarious heroics."

ROADS: Films Mirror Nation's Moods

classics and best sellers. There was *Catherine the Great*, *Madam Du Barry*, *Nell Gwynne*, *Queen Christina*, and *The Scarlet Empress*, to represent history. And *Emperor Jones* and *The Merry Widow* from well-known stage successes. *Little Women* with Katherine Hepburn, which broke all records at the Radio City Music Hall, was first in the list of homely old favourites which also included: *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch*, *The Girl of the Limberlost*, and *Anne of Green Gables*. Even the heroics had a familiar ring: *Tarzan and His Mate*, *Viva Villa* and *Treasure Island*.

Any psychologist will tell you that falling back on the familiar is a sign of insecurity. People felt serious doubts at this point over the whole experiment represented by the New Government. They mistrusted the Brain Trust, saw the threat of Fascism in N.R.A.'s regulation of business, dreaded the day of reckoning, the unprecedented expenditure, and saw no turn for the better.

The gangster films which made their first conspicuous appearance in 1933 with *The Bowery* (Wallace Beery), produced two hits in 1934. There was *Hi Nellie* (Paul Muni) and *When New York Sleeps*. Then in 1935 came *Public Menace* which acknowledges in its title the recognition of gangdom's threat. Here is a more serious note of insecurity, intensely important from the point of view of growing class consciousness. Roosevelt had campaigned for the Forgotten Man, and preached the right of the have-nots to have. People were only too well aware of enormous suffering, but they preferred to give, rather than to have the under-privileged take. The American temperament, since the Boston Tea Party, has been sympathetic to violent methods. But in recent decades the country has lost its class homogeneity and the immigrant population has produced a new and lower element. When this element uses violence it is another thing. Yet Roosevelt gave the under-privileged dignity and importance in his broad understanding of their needs and rights, and slowly people were beginning to take them seriously. Whether this was due to apprehension or not, it certainly resulted in a growing Social Conscience.

Chief among 1935's biggest pictures were *Crime and Punishment*, *Les Misérables* and *The Tale of Two Cities*, all stories of social concern, and motivated by social problems. Very different in scope were *Dante's Inferno* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*, but they too were motivated by man's struggles—in this case against the forces of the supernatural, or of nature, or of his brutal superiors.

Of a quieter nature, but still raising social questions were *David Copperfield*, *Becky Sharp*, Barrie's *Little Minister*, *Ruggles of Red Gap*, and *The Call of the Wild*. Each one of these pictures speaks to those aware of life's injustices and inequalities.

What, then, is *The Shape of Things to Come* for 1936? Wells' film is all very well for a more distant day, but the immediate answer is desperately needed. 1936's pictures give you plenty of clues to people's bewilderment but no solution, nor yet any attempts at a solution. People are waiting for the election to decide their course. A film like Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* will size up the wretchedness of unemployed, homeless or machine-driven people, but makes no suggestions. *Love on a Bet* is a touching picture of life going on, work or no work. But the only weapons given to fight the existing state of things here in America are courage, gaiety and love, which have not yet reformed an evil social system.

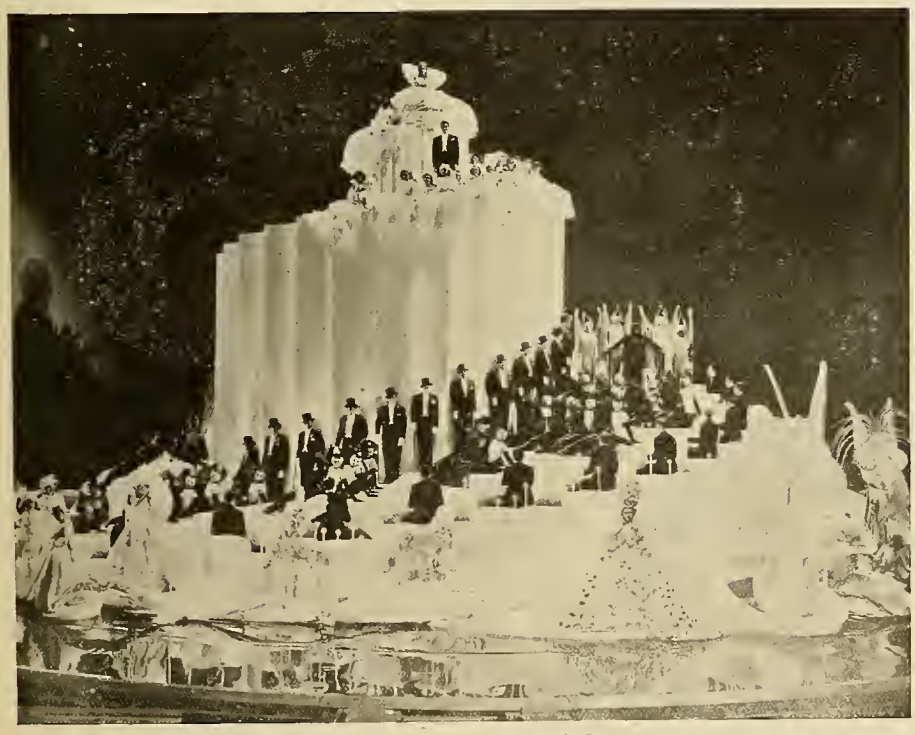
Marlene Dietrich and Gary Cooper in *Desire*, believe it or not, fall back on the old morality: the triumph of virtue over corruption: the glory of being poor but honest. A comfort, but not a concrete promise of relief to all sufferers. Then the sinister *Bullets or Ballots* suggests the most dangerous threat to any democracy—gang control of the electorate. *Mary of Scotland* follows this sinister note showing the fate of a country torn apart by factions and treachery. Altogether not a pretty picture of a country's dilemma, but if it were prettier it would not be the real dilemma that it is.

Appropriately enough, the last word seems to be Shakespeare's.

Of all his plays, 9 have been selected by producers, and 5 of them since 1935! *Midsummer Night's Dream* appeared that year, *As You Like It* has just been released, *Romeo and Juliet* will be shown at any time now and *Julius Cæsar* and *Hamlet* are promised.

Is not Shakespeare a barometer of Gargantuan eras? Are not the United States somewhat comparable to his Tudor times? They too are comparatively new at their job of governing, they are likewise swollen with discoveries and inventions. And they also are finding it difficult, in their recent awareness of international culture and thought, to digest all the new trends and conditions at once. Shakespeare could understand a vital, impatient people surging on to find scope for 'The huge armies of the World's desires.' And in these lines from *Love's Labour's Lost*, he has expressed some of America's bewilderment.

It is significant that film public and film producers realise that Shakespeare is the best interpreter of troubled times.



". . . these fundamentally childish people . . ."

what the clients say....

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Showmanship at the Curzon

By the Marquis de Casa Maury

ABOVE THE MASS of blue-prints and estimates which littered my desk in August, 1933, when I determined to build the Curzon, stood an indefinable phantom. It was to become my very shadow, perpetually asking for the answer to a problem.

A problem to which there is no answer—I was soon to learn. A problem called "Will they like it . . . ?" The answer meant success or dismal failure.

I felt downhearted and tired. It had been so difficult to find the money, the site—so few seemed to believe in the scheme, so many predicted disaster—that I faced this new phantom a little wearily, realising its formidable strength, for the yet unbuilt Curzon was already a combination of problems tied by a financial knot.

Throughout a hot summer I was still learning that intricate and delicate mechanism of how to run a first-class cinema. I knew the scheme was right. The policy was to present, in the greatest comfort to our future patrons, the finest Continental films.

To show films which were different from the American and English productions; films to show the efforts—sometimes so intelligent—of Continental directors: that was my aim, and furthermore to support them with the best newsreels and the cleverest shorts.

So the Curzon was built, and "Will they like it . . . ?" at once assumed a new disguise. It is satanic in its tricks. It chose to become a thermometer, but not of the dear Negretti & Zambra variety—no, nothing so simple as that—it became a thermometer with a pompous name entitled "Box Office Returns." It is precise and accurate. It gives *AFTERWARDS*, when it is too late, the answer to the problem.

But I soon discovered that no barometer is made giving even a doubtful forecast.

Fortunately, since the 6th March, 1934, when we opened with *Unfinished Symphony*, the thermometer steadily rose with only an occasional little dip, just to remind me that "Will they like it . . . ?" is ever present.

They *have* liked it—most of it. But sometimes a good film does not "break right." A case in point was *Merlusse*, acclaimed by the Press and yet its run was disappointing.

But so far I am satisfied. We have had many successes—very few failures. The Curzon is proud to have presented *Unfinished Symphony*, *Morgenrot*, *Chopin's Farewell*, *Refugees*, *Barcarolle*, *Crime Without Passion*, *Merlusse*, *Bonne Chance*, *La Bandera*, coupled with a brilliant lot of shorts and cartoons such as *Joie de Vivre*, *Rising Tide*, *Colour-Box*, the "3-Minutes" shorts, and those delightful *Secrets of Nature* of Gaumont-British.

We have also had amusing repertory revivals such as *The Marx Brothers' Season*—that *was* fun, though I nearly went mad trying to get the copies, which had all been "junked."

As for our newsreel, it is second to none. We edit it ourselves twice weekly from the two leading newsreel companies. In many instances, for special events, we have beaten by a large margin the West End show-houses.

As I write this article I have finally settled the coming 1936–1937 Season, and I feel that the ogre "Will they like it . . . ?" will have to keep very quiet for we have a brilliant lot of pictures including:—

Savoy-Hotel 217, *Mayerling*, *Fear*, *Revolt at Sea*, *Mazurka*, *The Sequel to 2nd Bureau*, *The Crime of Monsieur Lange*, *Golgotha*—the last subject by special permission of the L.C.C.

The Directors and Authors include Gustav Ucicky, V. Tourjansky, Anatole Litvak, Willi Forst, Leon Mathot, Julien Duvivier, Jean Renoir, Stephen Zweig, and Jack London. For Stars we have Gaby Morlay, Pola Negri, Ingeborg Theek, Winna Winfried, Renee Saint-Cyr, Edwidge Feuillere, C. Vanel, Adolf Wholbruck, Jean Murat, Albrecht Schoenhals, Pierre Renoir, Jules Berry, Harry Baur—some are new to London. These international films will be accompanied by a most interesting series of shorts, and *The March of Time*.

Lovingly I look at the Curzon. Its comfort, its quiet elegance are ever pleasing to me and have won the affection of our patrons—our mailing list is now over 5,000.

It has the right atmosphere to show films. I am proud of our showmanship—even great "supers" have copied some of our ways in presenting a programme.

I am lucky, too, in having a staff who feel as deeply as I do about the success of the theatre. Their opinions vary, of course; the "boys" in the Projecting Box are highbrows, their tastes lie in highly technical films; the ushers, on the other hand, prefer "musicals"; the Box Office girls have only one god—our old friend the thermometer.

I am delighted when our patrons evince a desire to see how it all works. For behind that slickness of comfort and showmanship lies a deadly efficiency. There is only one thing we cannot control, our cat. She figures in the balance-sheet as costing us 2*s*. 2*d*. weekly—but very often, alas, she goes up to 2*s*. 7*d*. She has presented us in two years with 22 kittens . . .

The great film is easy. It hits you. You cannot make a mistake. But there are other films, good films—but difficult to assess.

They all come in varying lengths of celluloid tightly wound in their tin boxes. They mean efforts, headaches, sometimes heartbreaks, and all cost money. As I watch it on the brilliant screen it is hard at times to know whether that celluloid running smoothly in the projectors will translate itself once more into money—without which this theatre cannot live.

But very soon the autumn season will open and with it the first presentation of our new programme. I know only too well that old and never-failing thrill . . .

Afterwards, in the quietness of the night, broken only by the hum of the air-conditioning plant, a conference will take place. Around the table will be my partner, my house-manager, the chief of the projection staff, the head box-office girl and our publicity agent, and in their tired eyes I will read once more the same old question, "Did They like it . . ?"

STAR TURN by René Clair (Chatto and Windus). Written by 1925, when Mr. Clair was very young, *Star Turn* has all the innocence of youth. Briefly it tells the story of a star who becomes possessed by the five chief characters of his various films. Each has a different temperament. There are two seductions (or was it five?), there's a duel, street brawls, etc., etc.

One day the Star makes a film in which he plays God. Stupendous publicity puts the film over, and it is projected all over the world on the sky. The world bows down before the Star and makes him the new God.

To those who have followed Mr. Clair's film career this book should provide an interesting sidelight on his development as an artist.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

EDITED BY H. E. BLYTH

Review of the Month

AS YOU LIKE IT.

Though this film has rather a feeble plot, it is superior to all others in one respect—the excellence of its dialogue. Herr Czinner, the director, seems not to have been entirely aware of this excellence, for far too much of the film is silent: after a minute of dialogue, we have a minute of mere photography, so that the *allegro* appropriate to comedy is reduced to a most depressing *adagio*. Evidently the technique of the film is different from that of the stage, and Herr Czinner has been interested to see what new advantages the camera can bring to the interpretation of Shakespeare. "None" would seem to be the answer, in so far as this production is concerned. The most obvious advantage would be in the settings, and these are the worst feature of the film. The exterior of Duke Frederick's palace looks as if it had been designed by Buzzard or Gunter, and the interior resembles the foyer and corridors of a Super Cinema De Luxe. The forest scenes are less vulgar but more insipid. It would have been possible to improve on a stage performance by using natural scenery, with romantic horizons and photogenic clouds. Alternatively an artist might have enchanted us with a stylised Arden. Falling bang between two stools, this film gives us a would-be realistic forest erected in a studio—prosaic, stuffy and sadly lacking the beauties of either art or nature. And the director's chief contribution to an idyllic atmosphere has been to introduce continual processions of sheep, chickens, ducks, cows, cranes and swans (to say nothing of a lioness, a python and Nanna out of *Peter Pan*). Much of the acting is excellent. Miss Bergner is enormously accomplished, and achieves her effects with the certainty of long experience. She cannot, of course, give us the English music of Shakespeare's verse, but she is never incomprehensible. Indeed her fault is to dot every i twice, to double-cross every t: she is altogether too emphatic, too expressive. Her conception of Rosalind has the merit of being comic and high-spirited, but there is an extreme archness in it which may grate on those who cannot live up to Sir James Barrie. At any moment, we feel, this Rosalind may ask us to clap our hands if we believe in fairies. But Miss Bergner's gravest mistake is that she has taken from Rosalind her innocence. Shakespeare's heroines are not mealy-mouthed, but they are fresh. And here the smile at moments lengthens to a leer: the jerkined girl weighs the luscious Orlando with too greedy and too knowing an eye, and we feel that she will reveal herself a witch and gobble him up. Peter Pan has got mixed up with something out of Strindberg. How disappointing that Miss Bergner with all her talent should so have missed the real Rosalind! Mr. Laurence Olivier's Orlando and Mr. Leon Quartermaine's Jaques are triumphantly good: when they are speaking we are indeed in Arden. They give us a notion of the delight which Shakespeare filmed could be.

—Ramond Mortimer, *The New Statesman*

AS YOU LIKE IT. (Paul Czinner –20th Century-Fox.)

Elizabeth Bergner, Laurence Olivier, Leon Quartermaine, Henry Ainley, Sophie Stewart.

This settles forever the argument if there ever were one that Shakespeare cannot be brought to the screen. The tawdry curtain abolished, the palaces and woods are before one's eyes. The scenes, no longer hampered and interrupted by mechanism of rope and pulley, flow into one another. And the words, my masters, the magic words, no longer ranted to reach the gallery nor whispered to please the front stalls, fall easily from the lips of the characters they marvellously make. —Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

For some odd reason it is from Mittel Europa that film-versions come of "Unser Shakespeare." Rheinhardt had a smack at *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. That is to say he aimed, Thor-like, a hammer-blow at that dainty thing and smashed all its poetry to pieces. Herr Paul Czinner has handled *As You Like It* more delicately. Though this film did not seem to me to have the Shakespearean flavour or anything like it and to be, as an entertainment, on the dull side, quite a considerable amount of the text remains. Some performances stood out well—Mr. Henry Ainley, his voice as glorious as of old, as the exiled duke, Mr. Laurence Olivier as Orlando, Mr. Austin Trevor as Le Beau, and Mr. Leon Quartermaine as Jacques, speaking the Seven Ages speech perfectly, though the producer made him munch an apple. There ought to be a law against munching apples in Shakespeare. Perhaps Mr. Quartermaine had caught the trick from Miss Elizabeth Bergner, who did a lot of apple-munching in *Escape Me Never*. For this actress's talent and charm I have the greatest admiration and also for her cleverness; there is not one trick of the trade she does not know. But in this Rosalind there was no music and a lot of restlessness. Her broken accent led her to over-emphasis, which killed the rhythm and much of the poetry.

—Philip Page, *The Sphere*

W.F.N. SELECTION

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town	**
Romeo and Juliet	*
As You Like It	*
The Great Ziegfeld	*
The Man Who Could Work Miracles	*

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

Alpine Climbers
As You Like It
East Meets West
His Brother's Wife
Men of Yesterday
Mr. Deeds Goes to Town
Swing Time
The Devil Doll
The Great Ziegfeld
The Man Who Could Work Miracles
The Road to Glory
Yours for the Asking
Romeo and Juliet

Corin and Touchstone, "As You Like It"

MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN. (Frank Capra—Columbia.)

Jean Arthur, Gary Cooper.

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town deserves all the superlatives, and is getting them—the brightest film comedy that London has seen since *The Ghost Goes West*. It is, if you like, a formula-product indexed in every studio in Hollywood—the story of a yokel who inherits a vast fortune, only to find that riches do not bring happiness. But the formula is not all-important, and marble is not just another kind of chalk because they both happen to be called $CaCO_3$ by the chemist. Under Frank Capra's direction, the Cinderella-Man theme emerges with a freshness, a gaiety, a sincerity which lifts it high above its predecessors. Capra must rank in future with René Clair and Chaplin, among the directors whose work keeps up the hearts of intelligent filmgoers the world over. —*The Daily Telegraph*

It is difficult to define exactly wherein lie the charm, the fun, and the realness of this delightful picture. First one is inclined to think that they are due to the personality of Mr. Gary Cooper, whose Mr. Deeds is so obviously a part after his own heart and one that he plays beautifully. Then there comes something—a note of impishness in the prevailing humour, a deft suggestion of satire, a moment of brilliant burlesque, a sudden touch of tenderness, and we are acclaiming Mr. Capra's intuitive understanding of human nature, the subtlety of his individual necromancy. *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* is that all too rare product, a comedy of circumstance built up with masterly skill into a dramatic and emotional unity. One could wish that both director and players might some day all get together again and produce a sequel. —M.E.N., *The Sketch*

ROMEO AND JULIET. (George Cukor—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard, John Barrymore, Edna May Oliver, Basil Rathbone, C. Aubrey Smith.

The picture clearly belongs to Norma Shearer and Juliet. Miss Shearer never seems desperate, and, though her eyes well so richly with tears, seems hardly either terrified or tragic, never inelegantly intense; at least she succeeds, where many a great stage Juliet has failed, in her youth. Actually, for once, we see a Juliet who is a girl. Leslie Howard appears to be an intelligent, well-bred, and not quite well Romeo. He is possibly a little chilly in the role. Because the lines are so faithfully and so warily rendered, and because for the first time in the talkies the recording machinery allows for smooth and pleasant and proper speech, this is really a very definite achievement. But I think the studio has been overwhelmed by Shakespeare; and all the business of the schoolroom and the exact replica of Renaissance art and the like have rendered the film somewhat cumbersome, removed the possibilities of something fresh and exciting. The fault is one we find in the majority of Shakespearean productions on the stage. This is a good, sensible presentation of *Romeo and Juliet*, but it won't be one you'll hark back to when you are discussing the movies as great art, if you ever do discuss them as great art. —John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

To intelligent cinemaddicts, it will be no great shock to learn that the best actors currently functioning in the U.S. act the play as well as it can be acted; that the most expensive sets ever used for *Romeo and Juliet* are by far the most realistic and hence the most satisfactory; and that the camera—which can see Juliet as Romeo saw her and vice versa—greatly facilitates the story.

Norma Shearer in "Romeo and Juliet"

As for the play itself, which is by far the best part of the production, it remains what it has always been, the best version ever written of Hollywood's favourite theme, Boy Meets Girl. —*Time*

Romeo and Juliet must be seen. There is nothing high-brow about it. It's about how two young folk fell in love and the triumph of that love even over death. There is spectacle, comedy and conflict. There is mystery, suspense, drama, tragedy—every element, indeed, to hold you spellbound. There have been Juliets for centuries, but none lovelier, more beautiful, more gracious, more appealing, more talented than Norma Shearer. Leslie Howard's Romeo is, to perfection, the moon-struck lover.

—Regina Crewe, *The New York American*

HIS BROTHER'S WIFE. (W. S. Van Dyke—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Robert Taylor, Barbara Stanwyck, Jean Hersholt, Joseph Calleia.

It would be egregiously foolish to try to review this picture, which is simply Mr. Robert Taylor, the current pride of Hollywood, pretending, but not too hard, that he is a scientist passionately engaged in a search for the spotted-fever bug. Mr. Taylor is not a star, not an actor, but a phenomenon. He is one of those things, like Valentino and influenza and the game of Monopoly, that hits the world overnight and leaves it gasping.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

"Mr. Deeds Goes to Town"

THE MAN WHO COULD WORK MIRACLES. (Lothar Mendes—London Films.)

Roland Young, Joan Gardner, Ralph Richardson, Ernest Thesiger.

The late Wells, we realise, has decided that the early Wells, the author of some of the finest comedies in English fiction, was not significant enough. A few immortals and great conspiracies are tacked, like news cuttings in a surrealist picture, to the early short story. The result is pretentious and mildly entertaining, with no moments as good as the war sequences of *Things to Come*, nor as bad as what followed. The direction and production are shocking. That is not Mr. Wells's fault. And it may not be altogether the fault of Mr. Lothar Mendes, the director, for the slowness, vulgarity, over-emphasis are typical of Mr. Korda's productions. Mr. Roland Young is quite the wrong type for Fotheringay, with his intermittent accent and his eyes which twinkle merrily with lack of conviction. The only performance of real character is Mr. Lawrence Hanray's as the scared birdlike bank manager. As for trick photography, of which this film is naturally an orgy, and like orgies of another kind grimly repetitive, it is always to my mind dull and unconvincing and destroys illusion.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

Already I have heard more eyewash spoken, more balderdash written about this picture than is fit and proper. Let us make two things plain. First, Mr. H. G. Wells has written no high-falutin, melodramatic story at which people are going to laugh by mistake. He has written intentional comedy—and rightly so. For who but the Perfect Man, or one in direct contact with Divinity, having the power to work miracles, is likely to achieve anything but a shambles? Mr. Fotheringay, diminutive draper's assistant of the story, begins by producing rabbits upon his counterpane and ends by forbidding the earth to rotate. Which, I'll lay odds, is precisely the asinine sort of thing that you or I would do in similar circumstances. Secondly, the film is no trumped-up vehicle for the trick-effects of Mr. Ned Mann (who worked miracles from the studio end), with the characters drifting, merely, as rag-and-sawdust puppets in a maze of spectacularly improbable phenomena. The characters are true characters, changing subtly (often imperceptibly) beneath the impact of each successive miracle. I shall feel an active and overwhelming anger if this picture is not attended by the success it so valiantly deserves. It is not a masterpiece. But the film shows, and shows vividly, the reactions of ordinary men and women in the face of supreme emergency—reactions so inadequate as to appear overwhelmingly ridiculous. In laughing at them you will be laughing at the fundamental follies of all humanity. I can think of no better cause for laughter.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

THE DEVIL DOLL. (Tod Browning—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Lionel Barrymore, Maureen O'Sullivan, Frank Lawton.

In the first minute I realised that this is what is known as "hokum," and the acting of the kind called "ham." But it is pretty good of its kind, the leading hokum-picker being our old friend Lionel Barrymore, who for most of the time is disguised as a quavering, if stalwart, old lady with a stoop, spectacles and ingratiating grin. And the plot is how Mr. Barrymore, revengeful, innocent ex-convict, takes over the plant of a pal who, with his wife, has invented a means of making Liliputians a few inches high. I confess to being amused. —P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

Ole Davil Hollywood is up to its tricks again. In *The Devil Doll* you will find a St. Bernard, a Great Dane, and a circus horse reduced to mouse-like dimensions. By the same magic, Arthur Hohl, Grace Ford and one or two other hapless players are shrunken to fountain-pen length and have a brisk time climbing Christmas-trees, staggering under the weight of a jewelled bracelet and sticking tiny daggers into the necks and ankles of Lionel Barrymore's full-sized victims. Not since *The Lost World*, *King Kong*, and *The Invisible Man* have camera wizards enjoyed such a field-day. They have pieced together a photoplay which is grotesque, slightly horrible and consistently interesting. A freak film, of course, and one which may overburden Junior's imagination, but an entertaining exhibition of photographic hocus-pocus for all that.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

THE GREAT ZIEGFELD. (Robert Z. Leonard—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

William Powell, Myrna Loy, Luise Rainer, Frank Morgan, Reginald Owen.

Before saying how enormously I enjoyed this magnificent film there is one point which I must insist upon making clear. This is that Hollywood, as was only to be expected, is completely wrong in its estimate of Florenz Ziegfeld. Or, rather, of his achievements. "The Great Ziegfeld has gone to rest, leaving behind the memory of the finest things ever done on the stage." This, of course, is balderdash. What Ziegfeld left behind was the memory of the finest leg-shows ever done on the stage. Anything else is mere leg-pull. No! Hollywood is utterly wrong about Ziegfeld, whose status was that of a Barnum or Buffalo Bill working in the field of Folies-Bergère.

—James Agate, *The Tatler*

To glorify the glorifier, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have spared no pains, no expense, no circular stages and only a few of their contract players. These figures from early twentieth-century mythology have been elevated out of the fleshy world. Their peachy skins and glassy eyes, like their emotions and noble souls, belong in a waxwork creation. The moral tone rises steadily throughout, and only Little Audrey, the chorus girl who drank, mars the waxen perfection of the tableau. —*The New Statesman and Nation*

The picture is on a really grand scale. It lasts for three hours. I thought it lasted for half an hour too long, and I knew Ziegfeld, and I knew Dillingham. I knew, indeed, nearly all the people in the picture, including Sandow. So if I thought it was long, it must have been. But, apart from all that, *The Great Ziegfeld* challenges the stage as few pictures have ever done. His Majesty's need not be ashamed of showing it. It is a much finer show than *The Wicked Earl*, in which Cyril Maude failed after a five years' absence from the London stage. It is a much finer show than *The O'Flynn*, in which Tree failed at His Majesty's. And it is a much finer show than *Chu Chin Chow*, which ran at His Majesty's for 2,288 performances. Indeed, it is one of the finest spectacles I have ever seen. Tree would have loved it.

—Hannen Swaffer, *The People*

ALPINE CLIMBERS. (Walt Disney.)

I laughed immoderately at the latest Mickey Mouse, *Alpine Climbers*. The spectacle of the frozen Pluto getting tiddly with his saviour, a St. Bernard with a handy keg round his neck, is wonderful. —Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

"The Man Who Could Work Miracles"

MEN OF YESTERDAY. (John Baxter—U.K. Films.)

Stewart Rome, George Robey, Ella Shields, Dick Henderson, Will Fyffe.

The British offering, *Men of Yesterday*, is one of those tremendously sincere and overpoweringly slow pictures which account for Hollywood's pre-eminence in screen entertainment. Its moral is the always laudable one of war-time comrades working for better human fellowship, and the chief character, a major, is most tenderly played by Stewart Rome, one of the best actors in the country. The Old Comrade spirit, as treated here, is shown as a brotherhood of maudlin, song-singing sentimentality on a mental level which, if it were true (and it is not), adds to the horrors of war's aftermath. My own war-time friends, of all grades, have none of the crassness of those here depicted, whose company, as a whole, struck me as very trying.

—P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

This is designed as a gesture of peace between the nations, inspired by the words of the King (then Prince of Wales) when, on behalf of ex-Service men, he held out the hand of friendship to our former enemies. John Baxter's direction invariably has a note of sincerity. I wish he could have contrived something less bald by way of a story. We might in fairness to the men who won the war have had some hint that in this case the officers were not the only educated men in the army.

—A. T. Borthwick, *The News Chronicle*

SWING TIME. (George Stevens—RKO Radio.)
Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire.

Swing Time has a beautiful Kern score. To his music dance Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers as well as they have ever danced. Indeed, Miss Ginger surpasses herself, and grows with every picture more spry and more pretty. There would appear to be every reason to expect one of those superb musical pictures that now and then come to light. But hardly a soul will come out from a view of *Swing Time* without some sense of disappointment. It's all due to the old, familiar complaint. It's another case of plot trouble. Without a hint of lightness or speed, the story, the "book," commands our contemplation of the despair of musical-comedy lovers separated and brought at last together. Mr. Astaire not only must dance; he must act, and act, and act, which is not his talent.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

We left the theatre feeling definitely let down. The picture is good, of course. But after *Top Hat*, *Follow the Fleet* and the rest it is a disappointment. Blame it, primarily, upon the music. Maybe we have no ear for music (do we hear cries of "No! No!") but right now we could not even whistle a bar of "A Fine Romance," and that's about the catchiest and brightest melody in the show. The others are merely adequate, or worse. Neither good Kern nor good swing. If, by any chance, you are harbouring any fears that Mr. Astaire and Miss Rogers have lost their magnificent sense of rhythm, be reassured. Their routines still exemplify ballroom technique at its best. And Mr. Astaire's solo tapping in the Bojangles number, with three giant silhouettes keeping step on the wall in the background, is one of the best things he has done.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

THE ROAD TO GLORY. (Howard Hawks—Twentieth Century-Fox.)
Frederic March, Warner Baxter, Lionel Barrymore, June Lang.

Very disturbing, because it might have been made in war time as a war picture. Made now, it can appear as a film exposing the horrors of war, and therefore anti-war in nature. It has plenty of horrors, due to William Faulkner's work on the script. The long scene where the men in the dug-out are aware that the Germans are tunnelling under them and may at any moment blow them to bits is a masterpiece for suspense. But on the whole the film is a repetition of the usual baloney about courage and fortitude and patriotism. The character of the old soldier who wants to blow his Napoleonic bugle gives the thing away. If you ask me, it's war propaganda.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

There is, during the swift chronicling of these disassociated events, an underlying theme: the glory of service, of regimental tradition, selfless discipline and sacrifice. War pictures have sanctified this concept before, and here again we are persuaded that heroes die gloriously, with trumpets blowing a charge and with time for a pathetic last word. At this stage of social enlightenment we have a right to expect something more, a word or two, perhaps, on the significance and the ultimate value of their sacrifice.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

YOURS FOR THE ASKING. (Alexander Hall—Paramount.)
George Raft, Dolores Costello Barrymore, Ida Lupino, Reginald Owen.

Raft's speciality these days is social climbing. Here he rises from the lowliness of a gambling joint to the proprietorship of a swell casino and, what is more, he has a yen to run something in the daytime. That is reformation. His pals misguidedly try to stop this evolution and the conflict is vigorous and funny, with Raft proving his right to survival and progress.

—Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Supporting Casts is hereby invited to press charges against Paramount for its unfair, prejudicial and deleterious conduct toward Reginald Owen, Ida Lupino, James Gleason, Lynne Overman, Edgar Kennedy and Richard Powell in the case of *Yours for the Asking*. Deponent urges upon the SPCSC prompt and punitive action against Paramount for handicapping these supporting players in the exercise of their filmic duties, and suggests that the society call to the studio's attention the manifest advantages of omitting Mr. Raft and Mrs. Barrymore from further comedies, neither having aptitude therein.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

EAST MEETS WEST. (Herbert Mason—Gaumont-British.)
George Arliss, Lucie Mannheim, Romney Brent, Godfrey Tearle.

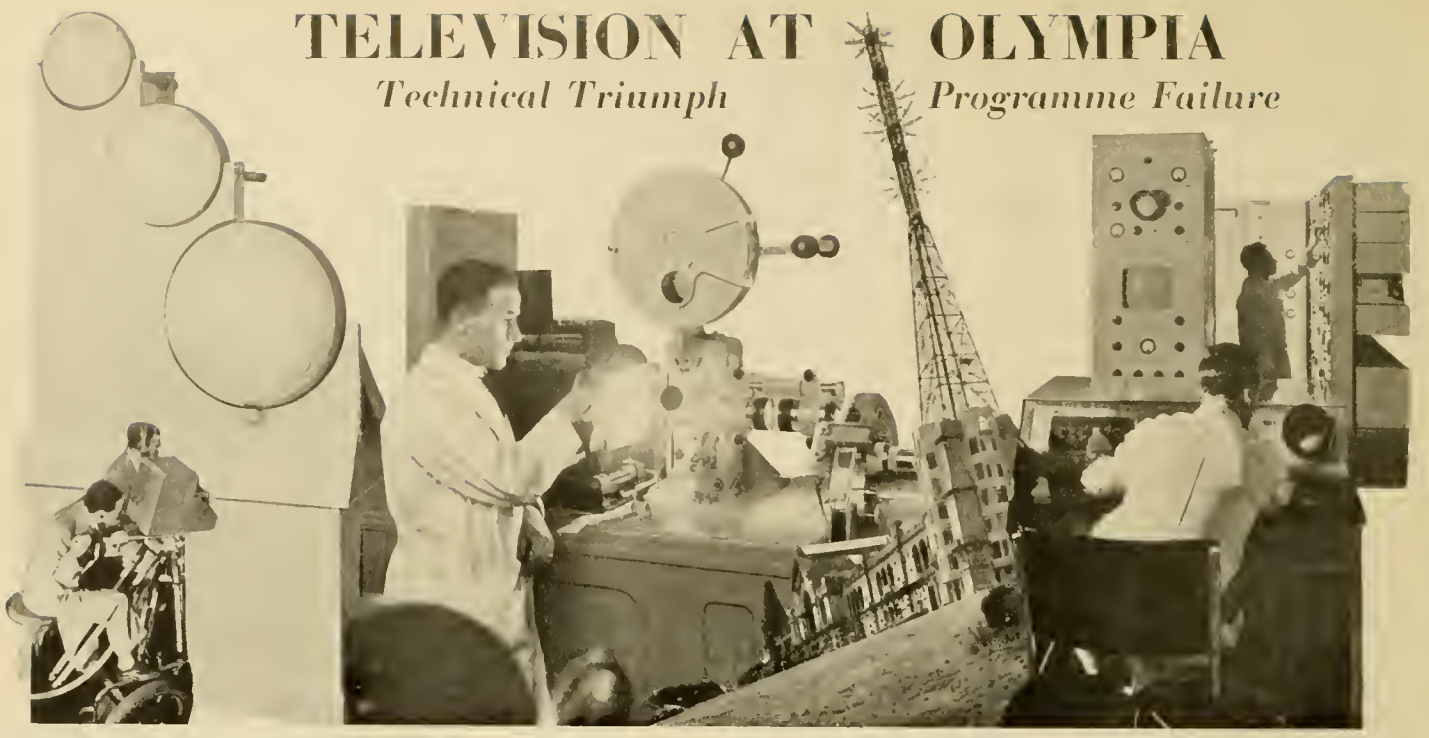
East Meets West is typical Arliss—the Arliss of *The Green Goddess*, potentate of an Asiatic State of undefined latitude and longitude, but unmistakably located in the region of Khatmandu. Here is staged a diplomatic struggle between Great Britain and an undesignated Eastern Power, with the keen eyes of the Rajah (Mr. Arliss) forever looking on. He negotiates with both sides, accepts a million from each and finally double-crosses both with the impartiality that becomes a benevolent neutral. (Somehow I don't think this film will ever be discussed by fans in the bazaars of Delhi and Rangoon, though rumours of it may raise blood-pressures in the club at Poona.) *East Meets West* is pre-eminently an Arliss picture, and as such to be seen at once, or given a miss, according to taste. I liked it.

—George Campbell, *The Bystander*

Ida Lupino, "Yours for the Asking"

TELEVISION AT OLYMPIA

Technical Triumph — *Programme Failure*



Crouching in a small viewing room and surrounded by women in large and extraordinary hats, or being moved on by stern commissionaires through the cavernous vaults of Radiolympia, it was difficult to feel the wild surmise of a Cortez over this latest marvel.

The remembered thrill of the first radio-set was definitely not repeated. Maybe this was partly because television looks like film, and we've all seen plenty of films.

A striking and simple fact—but one which few people seem to have visualised beforehand—is that there is no apparent difference on the television screen between televised films and direct transmissions from the studio.

What, in any case, was there to see at the television demonstrations, or rather, test transmissions, to give them the official term? . . . We saw a very small screen on which moving pictures appeared, having the quality and consistence of an average drawing-room home-movie, although rather better lit. And occasionally one noticed a slight curvature at the edges of the screen, which introduced a surprising and refreshing element of fantasy into the rather pedestrian excerpts from current and future feature films with which the transmissions were clogged.

There is no doubt that to the average layman the technical quality of the transmissions was very much better than had been expected. The flicker was not really very noticeable, and trouble with focus or blank moments were rare.

But was it necessary—even on experimental work—to have such appallingly dismal programmes? Why should there have been such a complete lack of showmanship, such a complete failure to look beyond the mere act of "showing pictures to the children"?

It was a good idea to run a film programme, and the Trade rallied round nobly with notable previews of films still in production or not yet in the cinemas. But there were too many excerpts, and they were lumped together in an indigestible mass, leavened only by arch announcements from the studio which any audience—television or no television—would willingly have done without.

Far more interesting were the direct transmissions. It was sensible to keep them simple, even though the prolonged examination of a singer's face recalled the interminable early talkies. In these, at any rate, one had a feeling that this was the real thing.

But most embarrassing of all—perhaps more embarrassing to the B.B.C. than to the general public—were the painful and ill-timed pieces of crosstalk between male and female studio announcers. It would have been so easy to have had an experienced producer in charge of these interludes. The quality of amateurishness could then have been kept out of a programme which, experimental or not, was the first presentation of a new and important medium of education and entertainment to the British Public.

To the non-technical viewer, there was not much observable difference between Baird and E.M.I., though many seemed to find Baird easier to watch. The transmissions can, at any rate, be written off as a technical triumph. A little creative work in the programme department would have made them a real guide to television's near future.

* * *

The International Broadcasting Union announce that 200 new broadcasting stations are at the present time being constructed throughout the world. These include: Europe 60, U.S.A. 32, South America 38, Asia 18, Central America, Mexico and Canada 12 each, Africa 5, and Australia 7.

Television—A Suggestion to the B.B.C.

The television programme at Olympia was nine parts film show. The material was shot by film people who in no single case had considered in production the special demands of a small screen and a crude definition. Excerpts from recent films were the principal feature and the Strand documentary of book-making had the honour of leading off. The G.P.O. film *Post Haste*, the only experimental selection, was a failure. The G.P.O. people were wrong in believing that a sequence of stills (in this case old prints) would best exploit the limitations of the new screen.

Mr. Gerald Cock has registered the B.B.C.'s first conclusions on the subject and as a matter of historical record it is important to have them. For television, he says, "films should be short, well lit, preferably rather light-printed, without white framing, not depending too much on a complicated continuity theme. They should preferably be on the simple side, without too many stunt shots or 'cleverness.'"

On one point we ask the attention of the B.B.C. Its own contribution at Olympia was small and perhaps in the difficult circumstances one could not expect more. But the contribution was also *slight*. As a matter again of historical record, the B.B.C. opened this great medium to the public with a song. The song was *Here's looking at you*, and it was, shall we say, beneath the occasion.

In October, the real thing will start. Twenty years from now the mood and manner in which the new medium was initiated will seem important. We hope that Sir John Reith will not allow the occasion to go by default. He might initiate the service himself. Better still, he might ask the prophet of *The Sleeper Awakes*, Mr. H. G. Wells.

FRONT POPULAIRE BATTLES FOR PROGRAMME FREEDOM

Wide reforms in the organisation of French State radio are expected as a result of the appointment of M. Jardillier as Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

Under present conditions the make up of programmes broadcast from State transmitters is governed by the "Conseils de Gérance." These committees, inaugurated by the unratified Bokanowski decree of 1926, consist of representatives of local government bodies, press associations, technical organisations and "listeners' unions." The listeners' unions, which have always had the upper hand in the dictation of programme content, are not considered sufficiently representative of true public demand. A Paris union of 30,000 members, for example, exercises a high degree of control over the programmes broadcast to 1,500,000 licence-holders. Moreover, the majority of the unions represent reactionary interest and demand programmes consistent with their conservative opinions.

With the recent entry into the field of Radio Liberté, the Front Populaire union, the battle for wider and more constructive programmes has become an almost purely political fight Radio Liberté's most powerful enemy on the conservative front is Radio Famille, an association whose aims are obvious from its name.

M. Jardillier plans to modify the composition of the Conseils de Gérance in order to make them equally representative of three interests: listeners, the "producteurs intellectuels" (*i.e.*, creative men and engineers in the broadcasting service), and the State. The listeners' interest, he hopes, will be met by extending the power of voting for representation to every licence-holder, irrespective of the listeners' unions, while the "producteurs intellectuels" will have the right to elect their representatives without interference from the Government. The State, however, is likely to have final say, since the Conseils de Gérance will function only as advisers to a "secretary" who will be appointed to each State transmitter in addition to the present regional directors.

The project also includes the re-organisation of the "Conseil Supérieur des Emissions," a body comparable to the B.B.C.'s General Advisory Council. The new Council will consist of 72 members, chosen by the Minister of Posts. The cultural spheres of music, drama, literature, education, etc., will be represented by six sections of twelve members each.

M. Jardillier has already submitted his scheme in some detail to the French cabinet, and it is likely that he will soon introduce it into the Chambres as "Le Statut de Radiodiffusion." He has agreed to interview representatives of all interests before drawing up a bill, and it is improbable that the plan will be carried to the Chambres before January.

Paris opinion holds that if the present scheme is successfully passed for operation, M. Jardillier will next turn his attention to the private transmitters broadcasting sponsored programmes from French soil.

B.B.C.'S CORONATION PLANS

According to authoritative reports the B.B.C. is planning a huge line-up for the Coronation next May. The projects include:

A budget of £100,000 to cover special costs, to be spent at the rate of £10,000 a week for ten weeks.

Big tie-ups with provincial cities to make the celebration programmes as wide as possible.

A two-hour feature on the lines of the Christmas Day programme, winding up with a speech by the King.

Commentators mingling with the crowds and broadcasting by means of short-wave "pocket transmitters."

Three new transmitters for the Empire service, and an increase in the Empire aerial-power to 40 kilowatts.

Arrangements are in progress for relaying the ceremonies to European countries and to America.

Big Names On the Air

Oct. 4th Sir Edward Elgar: *Falstaff* and Violin Concerto.

Oct. 21st Ralph Vaughan Williams, O.M.: *Sea Symphony*.

These two programmes bring before us the two biggest figures in recent English music. While the names of Elgar and Vaughan Williams remain as national symbols, their music represents a swiftly passing era.

No two contemporary composers could be more contrasted in their work. Superbly equipped with technical competence from the start of his career, Elgar looked always to Europe for inspiration, and found it most noticeably in Wagner, Brahms and César Franck. His death in 1934 severed a direct link with the musicians of the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. Vaughan Williams, lacking Elgar's technical brilliance, cultivates a severely national outlook. Though his early years were marked by French influence, his latter work has been increasingly based on English folk-song.

An interesting point is that Elgar composed less and less towards the end of his life, whereas Vaughan Williams, still working on in the sixties, dazzles with the volume of his yearly output.

Under the new B.B.C. programme scheme, the times of the Foundations of Music will no longer remain fixed at 6.30 p.m. but will vary between 4 p.m. and 10.30 p.m. The new timings should not, however, daunt regular listeners, for the October Foundations promise considerable interest. Haydn, generally considered the pioneer of the String Quartet, will be shown to be a comparatively late comer, and examples of the quartets of his predecessors Tartini, Caldara, Monn and Abel will be given. The studies will also include Rameau and Derring (17th Century English composer of madrigals).

Baird vs. Barthélémy

Pierre Autré, French avant-gardeist and manager of the Edouard VII cinema in Paris, writes in the French press:—

London, Sept. 3rd, 1936.—The annual wireless exhibition took place at Radiolympia in September. The crowd which pressed into the exhibition had to be seen to be believed—as also did the astute propaganda put out by wireless papers to persuade people to replace their ancient sets.

As regards television, transmissions took place every other day on the Baird system. This system is not up to much (very inferior to the French Barthélémy process). Last Sunday the press announced in splashing headlines that someone had tried to sabotage the transmitters. Was this an alibi to cover the mediocrity of reception quality?

Here are untouched photographs of reproduction by Baird and Barthélémy. We leave our readers to judge for themselves.

BAIRD

BARTHÉLÉMY

In opening the Radio Exhibition at Berlin, Goebbels stated that Germany, with 7,404,144 subscribers, has second place to Great Britain in the number of wireless licences. There are 12 short-wave beam stations in the country, reaching Africa, South Asia, Australia, East Asia, South America, Central America and North America.

Due to a typographical error, a wrong telephone number was published in one of the advertisements of Normans Film Library in our September issue. The numbers should have been Ger. 7481 *and Ger.* 6413.

Radio Can Help Manual Training of Children

(By the writer of "Children Should Plan School Broadcasts" in our September issue.)

CAN BROADCASTING be used in the education of very young children? This is the problem raised in the 1936–7 B.B.C. pamphlet on Broadcasts to Schools. The schools talks have so far been directed almost entirely to the Post-primary schools. The age-group which includes children under seven has been neglected except for one item: Miss Driver's "Music and Movement." in which the broadcaster leads infants in simple movements to music. The lack of official interest in the under-sevens implies that the B.B.C. sees little function for broadcasting in this direction. Yet the "Music and Movement" course was followed by nearly 1,000 schools in 1935–6 and is reported on favourably by teachers.

The problem of broadcasting to Infant schools is beset with difficulties. The tentative handling of it in the 1936–7 pamphlet indicates that the B.B.C. considers it delicate ground. Referring to Miss Driver's course the pamphlet states: "It remains to be seen whether similar technique can be applied to other series of talks for infant schools; for instance, can broadcasting be used in teaching the early stages of speech training?" This indicates a hesitation on grounds of treatment: but the primary problem is surely an educational one.

Infant education is largely concerned with the development of personality. The extremes of personal indulgence represented by A. S. Neill and Bertrand Russell demonstrate the danger to the community latent in insistence on the individual. But even in the more moderate spheres the personal factor is present, usually in the form of adherence to a system. Montessori is a typical example. The exercises of this system appeal almost entirely to the child's visual sense, involving as they do classification of objects according to colour, size, shape, etc. The directive capacity of the teacher is thrust into the background and to a great extent lost.

If we are to add another non-teacher element to Infant education in the form of broadcasting, we must take good care that it fulfils certain important conditions. It must not reverse a tendency to the visual extreme by an equally disproportionate appeal to the ear; it must be put to sparing and well-chosen uses. It must gather up the loose ends of the 'personality' experiments into an organised directive force as a social element in education. It must co-operate with the teachers themselves; for if it is to build up guidance of child activity through a series of central figures, these figures must fulfil a teacher demand.

On the basis of these principles we can enquire in what directions broadcasting can supplement and widen the Infant curriculum. The B.B.C. suggestion that radio might help in speech training seems a somewhat sterile lead. Controversy already rages round the B.B.C.'s tendency to standardise speech: an extension of verbal drill to Pre-primary children would succeed only in extending the field of disagreement. The Board of Education, steering, as ever, a middle course, comes pretty near the truth in stating: "There can be no doubt that an attempt to correct local peculiarities too early has a depressing effect upon the child's power of speech. With young children the capital aim must be to ensure that they begin to use language freely and clearly." It is well known that speech difficulties, based in part on psychological factors, often prevail during the ages of 5–7. These inhibitions can be overcome by securing freedom of expression by methods of example rather than precept. The language training of young children must clearly be an unconscious training; speech must be incidental to interests and occupations congenial to their age. No one can provide these better than the teacher herself. Supplementary teaching from outside is unnecessary.

There is reason to believe that broadcasting can begin good service to the under-seven group in organising and developing manual activities. Experiments have been made over a period of years in European countries—notably Germany—in this direction, with perceptible results. Simple stories of universal appeal, always involving new incidents calling for plastic illustration, were told by a skilled broadcaster. Children sent him specimens of their work and he answered their queries. At the end of the school year the best models were collected into an exhibition which aroused widespread interest. In this way the child's early manual efforts were organised and co-ordinated from a central source. There are two essentials to such a scheme: the broadcaster must be skilled in getting close to his infant audience (as Stephen King-Hall gets close to the 11-plus age-group); and the manual work involved must be tuned to the emotional and intellectual level of the children.

From the guidance of manual skill it is but a step to the first principles of æsthetic appreciation, a subject almost impossible to teach in theory at so early an age, and for which the curriculum can make little allowance when the three R's take preponderance at 7-plus. "The children's own efforts through their productions in the various media," says the Board of Education, "should be the most potent influence in the development of a sense of beauty; they are more potent than formal talks or attempts to arouse prematurely the kind of appreciation which is appropriate only at a later stage."

In such a directive organisation of the isolated creative impulses of young children broadcasting can render an important service to the community. But if the B.B.C. is to fulfil its true function as a supplement to the teacher's work, the demand must come from within the schools.

B.B.C. EVENTS

Friday, Oct. 2nd, ★2.30 p.m.: Film Talk. Alistaire Cooke. NATIONAL. 8.20 p.m.: Beethoven Promenade Concert. Choral Symphony. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Oct. 7th, 9.20 p.m.: Talk. Compton Mackenzie. NATIONAL.

★8.0 p.m.: Rameau harpsichord music. Dolmetch. REGIONAL.

Thursday, Oct. 8th, ★6.20 p.m.: Feature, *Information Bureau*. John Hilton. NATIONAL.

★8.30 p.m.: Cavalcade. (Production, Felton). REGIONAL.

Friday, Oct. 9th, 2.30 p.m.: Feature. *Herrings* (by Joan Woollcombe). NATIONAL. 3.35 p.m.: Talk for Sixth Forms. A. P. Herbert. NATIONAL. 4.0 p.m.: *Spheres of Action* (Games programme by Stephen Potter). REGIONAL.

Saturday, Oct. 10th, 7.30 p.m.: *In Town To-Night* (Production, A. W. Hanson). NATIONAL.

★8.55 p.m.: *Lohengrin* from Sadlers Wells. REGIONAL.

Sunday, Oct. 11th, 3.40 p.m.: Talk, *John Clifford* by Lloyd George. NATIONAL.

★9.5 p.m.: National Lecture. W. B. Yeats. NATIONAL.

Monday, Oct. 12th, 9.35 p.m.: *Nine Till Six* (Production, Stewart). NATIONAL. 6.0 p.m.: Ballet. Three Cornered Hat. de Falla. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Oct. 14th ★3.45 p.m.: I.F.A. Soccer Match, Scotland v. Germany from Ebrox Park, Glasgow. REGIONAL.

Thursday, Oct. 15th ★8.15 p.m.: London Symphony (Haydn). Symphony No. 3 (Dvorak). Conductor, Beecham. REGIONAL.

Friday, Oct. 16th, 3.35 p.m.: Talk for Sixth Forms. Vernon Bartlett. NATIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: Richard Derring's works. B.B.C. singers. NATIONAL.

★3.30 p.m.: Talk. Future of State Education. Bertrand Russell. REGIONAL.

Sunday, Oct. 18th ★5.35 p.m.: *Hippolytus*. Euripides. (Production, Barbara Burnham). NATIONAL. 9.5 p.m.: Negro Spirituals from America. NATIONAL.

Monday, Oct. 19th, 9.35 p.m.: *Record of a Birthday*, by Morna Stuart. (Production, Sieveking). NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Oct. 21st, 7.45 p.m.: Trafalgar Day Programme. NATIONAL.

★8.15 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra. Conductor, Boult. Mozart concert. Jose Iturci, piano. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Oct. 24th, 9.20 p.m.: A. E. Houseman's poems. Appreciation by W. R. M. Lamb. REGIONAL.

Sunday, Oct. 25th ★5.20 p.m.: The Honest Yorkshireman. (Production. Bridson). NATIONAL.

★9.5 p.m.: The Queen of Baltimore. (Production, Gielgud). NATIONAL.

Monday, Oct. 26th. 8.0 p.m.: Talk. School and College. Prof. H. A. Mess. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Oct. 27th. 9.40 p.m.: Finisterre. (Production, Creswell). NATIONAL.

Wednesday. Oct. 28th. 9.20 p.m.: Der Fledermaus, Act II, from Sadlers Wells. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Oct. 29th ★8.15 p.m.: Royal Philharmonic Concert. Mozart, Schumann, Mahler. Conductor, Harty. REGIONAL.

Saturday, Oct. 31st, 3.35 p.m.: Feature Programme: Television. (Production, Gilliam). REGIONAL.

Pioneer's Nightmare

D. P. Cooper recalls the early days

(No. 3 of Cameramen Series)

D. P. COOPER, a freelance cameraman whom film people know as Stiffy, has had a hand at all sides of the film game from developing to direction. He went into films from still photography, had a run with film road shows, managed a cinema at Tooting, was director of a film company and producer and cameraman as well. Worked seven years with Stoll pictures in the silent days.

It was Owen Nares who nicknamed him Stiffy, when they were working on one of his earlier films. He doesn't know what there was about him to inspire the nickname, but it stuck.

"We thought we had to perform magic in those days," he said, "to get the pictures at all, what with static on film, and cheap equipment.

About the only difference to-day is that there is more money to spend."

The film business wasn't the hectic job before then that it is now. They were easier days. To-day film people work so frantically that they forget the day of the week. The world outside the studio ceases to exist for them. This has come about because there is more money in films now. The productions are large scale, with highly paid stars. A lot of companies rent studios and cut down on time to save overhead. In the early days, about 1910, they made mostly 400-foot films. That was the time when Mary Pickford, directed by Griffith, were turning out full feature pictures of about 900 feet in America. In England the full features were outnumbered times over by the shorter comedy film. Actors were paid 7s. 6d. a day. If they had to fall into a stream a drink of whisky was thrown in. If it was winter time they got an extra half-crown as well. But in the summer that was not considered necessary.

"We were pestered by people who wanted to do stunt parts," said Mr. Cooper. "Of course, all the pictures had a bit of rough stuff in them, comic rubbish ending in a chase."

On one occasion they were working on a comedy, with the camera hidden behind something or other, when a policeman seeing the stars fighting in front of a pub, came up to stop the quarrel. He ruined thirty feet of film. And that mattered!

They used to make a complete short for fifty pounds, sometimes, for economy's sake, using the same actor twice, one shot as a policeman, the next as a baker.

"If there was only 20 feet of stock left in the camera," continued Mr. Cooper, "we would puzzle over the action until it could be done in the 20 feet, and shout to the actor to hurry up shutting the door when he went out."

The cameramen developed all their own negative in those days.

The actors had to be made up to look as if they had jaundice, for any natural healthy colour made them look like negroes. Pictures ran a great deal to exteriors. There were outdoor studios, platforms with sides, and no roof. Furniture was borrowed from their own homes. When they advanced a bit to interior lighting and larger sets "We were given," he said, "about enough light to light a bathroom."

Cooper worked on Victor McLagen's first picture *Call of the Road*. The cameraman was paid three pounds and the director two.

He has many good words to say for the men who brought film stock up to its present high standard. With the modern highly sensitive stock, he says, an amateur can get passable results at the worst. In the old days even an experienced cameraman was hard put to it sometimes to get usable stuff. There was often static on the film. No one knew what caused it and everyone blamed it on everyone else. "But the biggest nightmare was punching the sprocket holes," he remembered. For none of the film was punched. It came in 400-foot rolls, and most cameras carried 300 feet. One one occasion he went on location only to find that the stock hadn't been punched. So there was nothing to do but come back again.

They didn't go far afield in those days, because of the cost. When a film company went down to Devon to take some exteriors everyone said "What's the film business coming to?"

Cooper managed the first cinema specially built for the purpose, the Kings Hall Cinema, Tooting. All the others were converted halls or theatres. The programmes usually included a one-reel feature, probably American, a 400-foot short comedy, some newsreel, and perhaps a travelogue. That was about 1909.

R.P.S. SUB-STANDARD FILM COMPETITION

Considerable cinema activity will be apparent during the coming season at 35 Russell Square, the headquarters of the Royal Photographic Society, whose Kinematograph Group is becoming an increasingly live force both in the professional and amateur fields.

The Exhibition of Kinematography is to be held rather later this year than in previous years —in December.

As before, too, a sub-standard film competition is to be run in connection with the exhibition. Entries are divided into three classes: Class I—Open; any kind of film can be entered, e.g., personal, travel, story, cartoon, advertising, etc.; Class II—Open; restricted to scientific films; Class III—Limited to amateur films. Lengths are restricted in the case of Classes I and II to 30 minutes' projection time, and in the case of Class III, to 15 minutes.

Films may be on any sub-standard stock, and may be silent or sound, monochrome or colour. The closing date is November 2nd, and entry-forms may be obtained from the Secretary. There is no entrance fee; plaques and certificates are awarded to accepted films.

For some years, progress in the direction of professional cinematography was rendered difficult by the absence of any facilities for showing 35mm. sound films. At the end of last session, however, this difficulty was removed by the provision of sound equipment, installed by Sound Installation Services, Ltd.

The sub-committee appointed to consider co-ordination with the film industry put forward the suggestion that our leading technicians should be encouraged to take up the Associateship and Fellowship of the Society; just as in the credits of American films technicians use the letters A.S.C., denoting membership of the American Society of Cinematographers, so it is proposed British studio workers should indicate their status by the use of the letters F.R.P.S. on credits.

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Trick Film Makers

STAREVITCH ★ REINIGER ★ BARTOSCH

By MARIE SETON

THE MODERN ÆSOP

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS ago Starevitch left the National History Museum at Kovno in order to go to Moscow and direct films. Since 1911 he has made over forty pictures ranging in length from 375 metres to 2,500 meters. He directed the first Russian film, *La Cigale et la Fourmi*, to be shown abroad. It was presented in 1913 at the Gaumont Palace in Paris. This film was followed by a series of pictures based on the Russian classics in which most of the leading Russian actors appeared. But the longer Starevitch worked in the cinema, the less he liked directing actors, for they never did what he wanted them to do. This led him to experiment with marionettes.

It was not until he went to Paris after the 1917 Revolution that Starevitch finally resolved to specialise in puppet films. Several times since then he has endeavoured to combine actors and puppets in the same picture, as, for example, in *The Dragon's Eyes* and *Queen of the Butterflies*. But generally the actors have been children who fitted into Starevitch's fantastic world of animals and insects like Alice into Carroll's Wonderland. In some of his early films, Starevitch also mixed the real world with the artificial, using real flowers and living birds in scenes with doll figures. He has also made a certain use of tricks borrowed from the American cinema. Because of his studies in natural history and ethnology, Starevitch is continually giving his stories a scientific background. He has made many semi-scientific pictures of animal life, as well as a number of films in which he has adapted the customs of primitive peoples and utilised their decorative work. Underlying all his work is a scientific element.

Every one of Starevitch's marionettes has been made by himself, and he is his own scenic designer as well as cameraman. He uses the most varied material for his puppets. The more important ones have chamois leather faces, but their bodies may be made from all kinds of odd bits and pieces, twigs, wire, straw or cork. The change of expression is achieved by moving the stuffed features, particularly the leather around the eyes.

"Le Lion"

Starevitch's best known work in England is *The Mascot*, a bizarre film shown some years ago at the Marble Arch Pavilion. His most famous film abroad is *The Voice of the Nightingale*, which was awarded the Hugo Riesenfeld medal in America for being the most novel short film of the year of 1925. But probably his most important picture is his early sound film, *Renard the Fox*, made in 1930 and shown at the Sorbonne. In this film Starevitch makes a brilliant satiric use of animals.

Whether he is doing so consciously or not, Starevitch is in the nature of a twentieth century Æsop who is using the cinema in order to relate fables which are designed for a grown-up audience. Judging from Disney's success, urban life has not destroyed people's love of the fantastic when it is visualised, even if they say they no longer believe in fairy-tales. Because animals in themselves are like preliminary sketches of man who are subject to none of the inhibitions which chafe mankind, animal puppets or drawn figures convey human eccentricities much more freely than any human representation.

Starevitch's work is on the whole too curious and bizarre in style ever to become generally popular; and judging from the subject of his most recent film, *The Creation of the World*, it is only likely to appeal to a special audience. The designs for this picture are extremely interesting. It will be divided into eight episodes. (1) The firmament which whirls in space. (2) The Light in which hazy forms appear. (3) Earth separating from water; clouds presided over by a figure representing Force and which is seen in perspective. (4) The Sun, The Moon and the Stars. (5) Birds and fish. (6) Primæval animals emerging from hillocks. (7) Man formed of spiritual and material elements and emerging from a tornado between the sky and the earth in a spiral movement. (8) Man in Eden, a little figure in a vast universe.

IGOR STAREVITCH

"La Reine des Papillons"

"Le Lion"

SCISSOR CRAFT

How Lotte Reiniger Makes Silhouette Films

THE VICTORIA and Albert Museum are to be thanked for their recent exhibition of Lotte Reiniger's designs, notes and silhouettes, for their exhibition made it possible for the first time to understand the extraordinary craftsmanship which goes into the shortest and simplest of her films. Moreover, it was interesting to see the development of her work from 1919 when she made her first picture, *The Ornament of the Loving Heart*, which was sixty metres long and had but two figures and no background to her last picture, the miniature opera, *Papageno*, based upon music from *The Magic Flute*. This exhibition, even more than her films, showed that Miss Reiniger is a unique artist in an industry which depends almost as much upon the assembled work of different departments as the manufacture of a motor car. Out of nothing but thin black cardboard and semi-transparent tissue paper twenty-five films have emerged which are her creation and execution from beginning to end. Her only assistant is her husband, Carl Koch, who arranges and synchronises her films.

Lotte Reiniger finds that her themes are invariably suggested by music, and having worked them out in detail, she makes a series of sketches, conceived in colour in order to give a sense of background to each episode. The preliminary work completed, she develops the characters in a number of pencil studies which are sometimes actual portraits. Everything which appears in the film is then cut out with nail-scissors. The background, either as a kind of back-cloth, or as a panorama to be unrolled like a Chinese painting and moved along the table on which the scenes are 'shot', is cut in semi-transparent tissue paper, one to eight layers. These again are cut in different shapes in order to give the effect of varying tones. The use of any other material would be out of harmony with the scenery and figures in the foreground. The immovable objects such as houses and trees are cut in black paper; while the movable figures are in thinnish black cardboard.

The table on which the film is made is 4 feet by 3 feet, and has a frosted glass top. The lights (mercury lighting) are underneath, the camera directly above. The camera can be adjusted horizontally and vertically. For close-ups, instead of moving the camera nearer the silhouettes on the table, Lotte Reiniger replaces the small figures used in the long shots by larger ones, the largest being two feet high. She does this because the small figures, when enlarged by a close-up shot would appear too crude; while the expression of the face could not be sufficiently detailed. The heads used in close-ups have jointed features and eyes which can be opened and shut; while the largest silhouettes have even jointed fingers, so that they can be manipulated in an infinite variety of movements.

Finally, each shot has to be taken singly, so that for the full-length film, *Prince Achmet*, made in 1926, at least a quarter of a million separate photographs were taken. The actual photographic work is based on a mathematical calculation worked out from the music, which, to quote Eric White in his book *Walking Shadows*, 'is subdivided as accurately as possible into phrases, these phrases into bars, the bars into notes and the notes into frames representing one twenty-fourth of a second.'

Every figure and object in these silhouette films has to be created in two dimensions, and yet appear to the audience as though conforming to the law of a world in three dimensions; moreover, they are manipulated on a horizontal plane. Only the movements and the lines of the profiles can give the characters individuality and convey their thoughts. Out of black paper a gallery of delightful characters has been created. Figures of grace, like the heroine of *Prince Achmet*, and the more recent Galathea, of fantasy like the cheerful birdcatcher in *Papageno;* of quite remarkable flexibility and pathos like the little chimney-sweep in the picture of the same name.

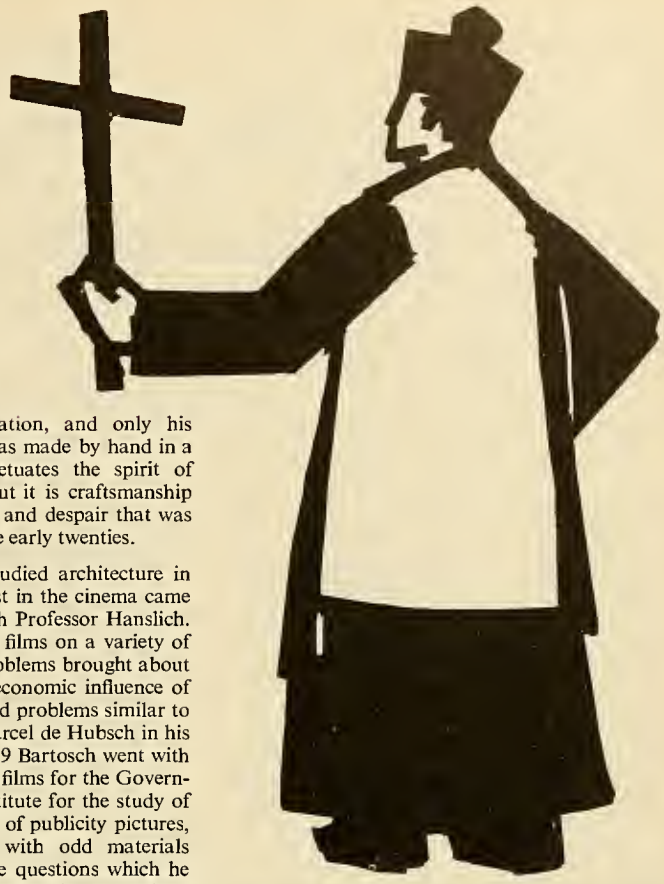
Not only is Lotte Reiniger a good producer, or to be more accurate, choreographist, who pays great attention to details of setting and decor and historical accuracy, but she is a good dramatist. Her dexterity in developing quite a complicated plot in twelve to sixteen minutes, is no less important than her characterisation. In characterisation she excels in the creation of humorous and commonplace figures, such as the ribald old men in *Galathea,* and the parents and gangsters in *The Little Chimney Sweep*. Like the two great artists Chaplin and Disney, Lotte Reiniger's work, though the form is fanciful, is grounded in the observation of how people behave, and not in any film theory. Though Lotte Reiniger is a German (and Aryan) she is an artist of whom no country can have the monopoly.

Her new film, *Dream Circus*, will have a fantastic sequence in colour. The story, a small boy's dream of a circus, was suggested by Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* music and it is being made in this county for the Facts and Fantasies series produced under the auspices of Thorold Dickinson.

Mediaeval Tradition in Movie

The Work of Berthold Bartosch

Mystic and Philosopher

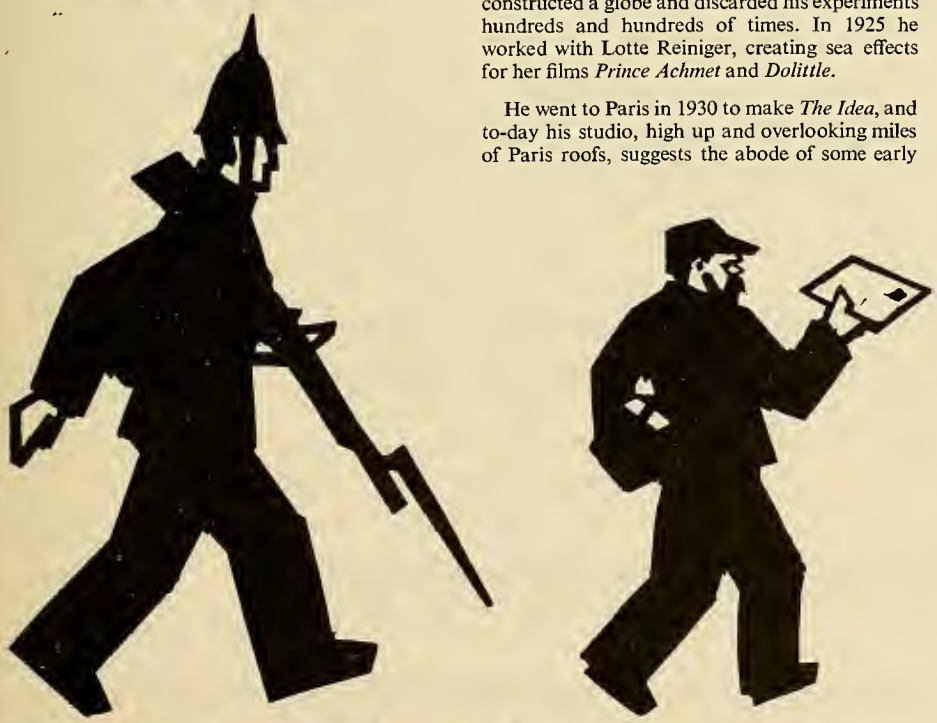


BERTHOLD BARTOSCH is one of those artist-craftsmen who strayed into this world in the wrong generation. He was born in Bohemia in 1893, when he should have come four centuries earlier and painted saints or carved gargoyles for Gothic cathedrals; that is, until the Inquisition trapped him for heresy. Bartosch is a heretic, but none of the political or religious creeds of to-day can be very lenient towards him since his most important film, *The Idea*, is full of strange mystical fancies. Nor does his method of work fit into an age of speed. He works very slowly, changing this, reshaping that, as patient as Ghiberti, who spent half his life carving the Door of Paradise for the Baptistry at Florence.

The Idea is a modern version of the struggle for an earthly paradise, and because that ideal is hard to realise in life and Bartosch has a regard for truth, the film is halting in form and often obscure in what it has to say. It twists and turns, and at first gropes to interpret in the form of a film the woodcuts of Frans Masereel. But the style of Masereel's book, which was so characteristic of post-war Germany, quickly disappeared, for it could not stand animation, and only his themes remain. *The Idea* was made by hand in a Paris garret, and it perpetuates the spirit of mediaeval craftsmanship, but it is craftsmanship tempered with the hunger and despair that was rife in central Europe in the early twenties.

As a youth, Bartosch studied architecture in Vienna, and his first interest in the cinema came through his association with Professor Hanslich. They made short statistical films on a variety of subjects: the nationality problems brought about by the peace treaties; the economic influence of the Russian Revolution; and problems similar to those now dealt with by Marcel de Hubsch in his Three-Minute Films. In 1919 Bartosch went with Hanslich to Berlin to direct films for the Government. He worked in an institute for the study of 'kultur,' and made all kinds of publicity pictures, continually experimenting with odd materials and always returning to the questions which he still seeks to solve: how to create the atmosphere of the cosmos; the different points of light, and the movement of the universe, of the sea, the sky and the stars; the creation of the world. He constructed a globe and discarded his experiments hundreds and hundreds of times. In 1925 he worked with Lotte Reiniger, creating sea effects for her films *Prince Achmet* and *Dolittle*.

He went to Paris in 1930 to make *The Idea*, and to-day his studio, high up and overlooking miles of Paris roofs, suggests the abode of some early scientist, perhaps an astrologer or an alchemist. There are stacks of boxes containing queer figures, created out of cardboard and glue and bits of wire. There are nightmare birds and guns and pasteboard towns and silver paper moons. And Bartosch sets this curious world of his moving on his 'trick' table, which is constructed of four to six layers of glass. The sheets of glass lend perspective to the figures, for the smallest is laid upon the lowest sheet of glass and the others, as they grow larger, are graduated upwards so that the largest is on the top of the table. Everything is moved by hand; for example, the flight of aeroplanes in *The Idea*. The most distant, and therefore the smallest aeroplane was moved a fraction for each separate 'shot,' the next a little more, and so on until the largest appeared to move much faster; moreover, the largest aeroplane on the top of the table was brightly lit; while the smallest was blurred by a little soap being rubbed upon the last but one sheet of glass. In all his work light plays the chief part in the creation of the illusion of space.



Jointed figures used in Bartosch films

Bartosch dreams continually of films of the universe in which man moves as a speck, but the most important speck; but in order to live he makes advertisement pictures for Paris shoe-shops. Evening shoes waltz, tennis shoes skip; every movement is calculated, 'like an architect's plan.' And now that the question of colour is in everybody's mind, Bartosch goes to Chartres Cathedral and studies the windows, and decides that if he ever makes a colour film he will outline his contours with a neutralising line, either black or grey, like the craftsmen who painted on glass in the Middle Ages.

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"'ERRING OR 'AM?"

Harold Raymond of Chatto & Windus on the public relations film

Cover to Cover is the most interesting documentary since *Night Mail*. Produced by Paul Rotha and directed by Alexander Shaw it describes the history of printing, the manufacture of books and the place of books in the modern life. Rotha's sense of impressionist documentary is here happily combined with Shaw's more matter-of-fact style. The informative passages sit comfortably with poetic passages and direct commentary is effectively intershot with recitative.

An interesting discussion has been going on about *Cover to Cover* in the pages of the *Publisher and Bookseller*, and one which every publicity officer should note. In the past there has been great divergence of opinion between the advocates of the public relations or indirect propaganda film and the advocates of the direct publicity film. Each has scorned the other's theories and practices. On the whole the indirect propagandists, with the entire weight of the documentary movement behind them, have had the advantage; but there has always been a doubt among the conservative minds as to the selling value of the documentary film.

In the *Publisher and Bookseller*, Mr. Harold Raymond, a director of Chatto and Windus, puts the case for indirect propaganda better than it has ever been put before, and he speaks as one slowly converted. Here is his argument: "I think that Messrs. Rotha and Shaw have produced an admirable piece of work, and they have made me feel still prouder of my trade. Most people in the book trade would agree somewhat vaguely that it is a good thing to have a film concerning the origin, production and use of books, but they ask dubiously, 'Will the film increase the sale of books?'

"That was certainly the question which I put to myself when first the film came under discussion, and to begin with, I was far from an enthusiast on the idea. Later I became a wholehearted convert. And how? Simply as the result of a careful cross-examination of myself concerning my reactions to *Drifters*, the film of the herring industry. It was, I believe, the first of the documentary films. I saw it some ten years ago and was very much impressed by it. Did I come out from that picture registering a vow to support those stout-hearted fishermen by eating a herring for breakfast every other day of the week? Nothing of the sort. If you had asked me at the time whether the film would have any effect on my consumption of herrings I should probably have laughed at the idea. But if you ask me now whether I have eaten more herrings since and as a result of seeing that film, I will say quite positively that I have eaten at least twice as many per year. This change of habit has not resulted from any conscious and deliberate intention. The effect of that sort of publicity is subconscious. The glamour, the thrill, and the sheer interest of that film pulled the humble herring out of the bottom drawer of my mind and left it lying on the top; so that when a waiter peremptorily utters "Erring or 'am?' in my ear, I automatically say "Erring.'

"These are reluctant admissions. We would all of us like to feel ourselves superior to the wiles of the advertiser, but we none of us are. Thousands will see the Book Film and will express their admiration of it. Probably none of them will vow to spend more on books as a result, and few of them will be conscious of any direct effect of the film upon their lives. Yet their lives *will* be affected. Books will be brought to the upper surface of their consciousness. The romance of a book's history, and the thrilling complications of its manufacture and distribution will be revealed to them, and they will see shots of diverse people using and enjoying books. They will thus grow more book-conscious, just as I, alas, have grown herring-conscious."

Technical Note *(by John Grierson)*

The opening passage, which deals with the development of writing and printing, reveals how well the impressionist technique can be used for wide sweeps over history, and Rotha might note his success in this passage against further possibilities. The connecting time images of wave and gull are excellently chosen.

Less can be said for the poetic images of the film written by Winifred Holmes. She is a poet of feeling, but past experience of poetry in *Coal Face* and *Night Mail* demonstrated (sometimes by default) certain limits of use, and Mrs. Holmes has not noted them. Just as commentary fights with titles, so overloaded lines of poetry fight with the attendant visual images.

The first level of attention would seem to go always to the visuals, and the degree of concentration left for poetic speech is seriously affected. It was impossible in this case to hear or follow the detail of the Holmes poetry. The effect was not only missed: it was in the deepest sense out of synchronisation.

In future films, where poetry is used, an attempt must be made to relate the rhythm of the poetry to the rhythm of the visual images. The poetic images chosen should more obviously complement the visual images. Perhaps the most serious mistake (already made in *Coal Face* and at least once in *Night Mail*) is to allow the feeling to come out of the poetry. Feeling is not effective when it is foisted on the film, and excitement in the commentator is not quite the same as excitement in the film. Feeling should obviously emanate from the combination of effects, i.e. from the combination between the visual images and the poetic.

News Review

An attempt to draw comparisons between modern styles of architecture and modern motor car design is the basis of *Something New—Something Finer*, a film of the Austin Motor Company.

* * *

Protests against "slightly hysterical safety-first films" is made by *The Motor*, the editor of which writes "at present propaganda films are failing to achieve whatever is the purpose in view. If they are intended to discourage this motoring, they are merely silly, for they are too far-fetched to terrorise more than an insignificant percentage of those who take them seriously."

* * *

11,720 Plymouth school-children attended a special show of a safety-first film entitled *Alert to-day—alive to-morrow.*

* * *

A serious shortage of films dealing with "normal scenes and events in the natural life of the Dominions" is reported by the Imperial Institute. At present the limited number of films of any given Dominion or Colony makes it extremely difficult for the Institute to provide a run of more than three films in any specified month. The Institute is calling for an adequate number of films with 20 or 30 copies of each.

* * *

The new Morris Motors film programme ranges from a screen record of a journey across the Sahara in a Morris car to a service-station cartoon.

* * *

Slow-motion films are being used to speed up production at the Peek Frean biscuit factory, London. "We are taking films of various processes, such as packeting, and showing them in 'slow motion' to new employees, so that they can see exactly how a particular process can be carried out to the best advantage," a member of the firm states. "Our 'film stars' are girls and men who have shown exceptional ability in the manufacture and packing of biscuits."

* * *

The Irish Tourist Association is producing a travel film of County Clare.

We collect FILM STARS' telephone numbers

Something like 90 per cent. of British film stars are available for Publicity Films Ltd. productions. We use a lot of them. Glamorous little X..... Y..... may be just the girl to endear *your* product to Britain's millions of cinemagoers. Have a word with us about it.

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BIG AUDIENCES FOR GASPARCOLOR

GASPARCOLOR WAS invented by the Hungarian, Dr. Bela Gaspar. It is reported to be a slightly cheaper system than Technicolor but in no way inferior to it. (Technicolor has gained its supremacy largely through its use by Walt Disney). Up-to-date Gasparcolor has been used, apart, of course, from test 'shots' in natural colour, exclusively for 'trick' films. The average cost of a picture such as *The Red Box Fantasy*, directed for Gasparcolor by Paul Bianchi as an advertisement for Craven A Cigarettes, is £1,200.

Gasparcolor originated in Austria. The firm, under the direction of Dr. Gaspar's brothers, moved to Berlin, where there is still a branch, and later the head office was set up in London with a studio and laboratory at Thames Ditton. Gasparcolor has made a number of pictures in England, mostly for advertisement purposes. Their early films made in Berlin at the beginning of 1934, *Circles* and *Muratti*, were directed by Fischinger who is now working in Hollywood. George Pal, directing publicity films for the Dutch firm, Philips Radio, then adopted the system and all his pictures have been made in it.

The Red Box Fantasy was shown at the Academy early in 1935 where it ran for seven weeks; probably the longest 'run' ever accorded to an advertisement film. Between February and May 1935, the film was also shown in four hundred of the leading cinemas throughout the country, and was seen by an audience of over 4,000,000. But it was the Philips Radio picture, *The Ship of Ether*, which brought Gasparcolor to the notice of British advertising departments. The result is that Cadbury, Euthymol Toothpaste, Horlicks and other firms have commissioned pictures.

Cadbury, who spends something in the region of £20,000 a year in film propaganda, has had considerable success with the Bournvita film *Fun on the Farm*, another Bianchi picture in Gasparcolor. This film is seen by something like 400,000 people in the year outside the ordinary cinema public. Cadbury's publicity reaches a very wide public for they organise the showing of films in schools, institutes and at lectures.

The Pink Guards on Parade made for Euthymol Toothpaste and directed by Fischinger has had an equal success; while Horlicks may continue their policy of making film cartoons in colour.

Gasparcolor film consists of a celluloid base, on one side of which is a yellow emulsion, with a pink emulsion above it. On the other side of the base is a blue emulsion. These emulsions are sensitive to blue, red and blue, or white light respectively.

For trick filming, three times the final length of film is used. An automatic clutch-pedal opens the shutter, photographs the scene *three times*, through different colour filters, on to the negative, which is automatically moved one frame for each filter, so that the *same* picture is repeated three times, on the three different emulsions, the colour of the light, as affected by the filter, affecting, in turn, its respective emulsions.

In printing, an automatic printer is used which prints only every third frame. Run through, it first prints the pink emulsion, then is set to print the blue emulsion on the pink, and finally the yellow on the blue and pink, giving the complete colour positive.

News Review—cont.

The Navy League and the Admiralty are giving the "fullest possible co-operation" in the making of *Navy Eternal*, a propaganda picture from the Herbert Wilcox unit based on the story by Bartimeus. Norman Walker, who made *The Middle Watch*, will direct.

* * *

Propaganda for the Anti-aircraft Brigade of the Royal Artillery, with a strong recruiting angle, is contained in *The Gap*, produced by G.B. Instructional.

* * *

Publicity Films Limited have just completed two films of the Irish Linen industry. One, 500 feet in length, is intended for distribution in cinemas in this country, while the other, a two-reeler, is for showing in the United States, Canada and Australia. John Alderson directed and the films were photographed by Walter Blakeley.

Bile Beans and Zam-Buk (on the electric signs) receive a great deal of advertising space on the screen in the new Gaumont British picture *Prosperity in Britain*, the opening scenes of which were shot in Trafalgar Square.

* * *

The first colour film ever made in South Africa has been taken showing the history and development of the Union's wine industry. The film, which has been made on behalf of the K.W.V., will be shown in Cape Town shortly and will be used overseas to advertise South African wines.

* * *

The Vickers propaganda film now being shown at the Johannesburg Exhibition is 6,000 feet in length and is designed to present a panoramic picture of the entire Vickers' Organisation from the manufacture of battleships, liners and flying-boats to the smallest and most delicate scientific instruments.

Recipes from Boulestin Films

MARCEL BOULESTIN, one time actor, music critic and now celebrated expert on cooking has played an important part in the new Gas, Light and Coke Co. programme of films.

Marcel Boulestin is a polished screen actor and demonstrator, neat, dexterous and articulate. S. C. Leslie, go-ahead director of publicity of the G.L.C., plans to make the current films the first of a series to create good cooking in England. The films, *Party Dish*, *Spanish Omelette* and *Scratch Meal* run to a combined length of twenty minutes. Elton directed. They will be available to Film Societies and others interested. Better than a critique—here are some of the recipes demonstrated.

TZARINE OF VEAL (Party Dish): Take a cucumber. Peel it and cut into chunks. Put in hot salted water and boil. Take fillets of veal or beef. Fry in butter. Turn veal when white on one side. When cooked, keep hot. Take the pan with the juice from the meat and the fat. Pour in a tumbler of cream. Season cream with paprika, pepper, and salt. Bring to the boil over a fierce flame and reduce. There is no danger of the cream curdling. Remove from the flame. Add butter about the size of a small egg to the cream *off* the fire. This is the only thickening. On no account put cream back on fire, or butter gets oily. Pour sauce over veal and cucumber.

SPANISH OMELETTE. Cut up a little cooked bacon, potato, onion, and a little raw parsley. Take one egg for each person. Break and beat lightly. Add ingredients. Season. Get a pan really hot. Put in bacon or pork fat. Pour in the eggs. Stir while shaking with the left hand. The omelette should be a little more cooked than an ordinary omelette and flat in the pan. Toss like a pancake. Cook the other side. Serve flat.

PILAFF OF CHICKEN. Put raisins to soak in warm water. Take a cold chicken (or other cold scraps). Cut up the meat—the bones can be used for soup. Warm up in butter. Season with paprika, curry powder, pepper and salt. Cut up an onion. Fry lightly. Add as much washed *raw* rice as required. Fry gently till opaque. Add twice as much liquid or stock as rice. Cover with a buttered paper. Put a lid on. Finish for twenty minutes in a moderate oven. When cooked, mix with chicken and raisins. Serve hot.

FRIED APPLES. Take yellow-skinned eating apples. Peel and cut in quarters. Fry gently for about quarter of an hour in butter till brown and soft. At last minute add cinnamon and castor sugar to taste.

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Producers of Documentary, Educational,

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A PAST TO BE PROUD OF

THE FILM INDUSTRY is one of those industries which has a complete disregard for its past and a deplorable disrespect for its medium. It has been left as a rule to outsiders to consider the movie in any other way than as a medium for "getting yours while the getting's good."

A craftsman is proud of his tools and the traditions of his trade; a writer respects manuscripts and first editions and his membership of a respected profession; an artist reveres the works of the great men who have gone before him. From a practical, if no other, point of view, this attitude to work is important to the status and prosperity of industries, crafts and arts. It gives it standing in the eyes of the world. This fact is important at the moment when the film trade is concerned with attracting to the cinema the millions who prefer other forms of amusement. The non-cinema-going public lies chiefly among the middle and upper middle classes: the people who still refer to films as "flicks." The way to appeal to this public is not by means of glaring 48-sheet posters or stories of extravagance and wealth. They can only be brought to the cinema if they have respect for it. But because the industry has had no other thought than immediate cash return, it has given itself a bad name with this class: it is despised as the "dope" of the working-classes.

In Parliament, and in the civil service too, the industry as a whole finds little respect. How much easier it would be for the trade's representatives to present their problems to officialdom if it were felt that behind this money-getting machine, lay traditions of public service and creative effort. For instance, the presentation of the case for "Sunday opening" would carry more weight, if the proper authorities felt that films had real social value and that the film trade sincerely believed in keeping people off the streets.

It has been left to the highbrows, as the film trade scornfully calls them, to give the film trade any background it possesses.

It has only been through the books, the articles, the pamphlets of such people as C. A. Lejeune and Paul Rotha that the intelligent public has been brought to consider and even go to the film. It has been left to the Rockefeller Foundation in New York to create a museum of films. Similarly, The British Film Institute came into being in spite of the trade, and the trade has done nothing but obstruct its progress. Yet it is only through the above-mentioned methods that the film industry will achieve any sort of respect. It is only through the adoption of these methods that the extra millions will be brought to the cinemas.

If the Cinematograph Exhibitors Association is seriously considering the spending of money on propaganda, they should sponsor books like *Movie Parade*, by Paul Rotha. *Movie Parade* furnishes a background to the movie, indicates its technical and theoretical development and gives in effect a panorama of the history that lies behind the industry. The C.E.A. should weigh-in with a large subscription to the Film Institute and should appoint their worthiest representatives; they should support and issue articles written by the scorned "highbrows." They must give the industry tradition and a background. Only through these methods will they merit the respect of officialdom and attract those many millions who don't go to the "flicks."

(Stills from Paul Rotha's "Movie Parade.")

1927

"Sadie Thompson," *Raoul Walsh's adaptation of Somerset Maugham's famous story* "Rain," *provided Gloria Swanson and Lionel Barrymore with their finest acting roles. The recent sound version by Lewis Milestone threw into relief the qualities of the earlier version.*

1924

"The Iron Horse," *by John Ford, was the second of the big epic pictures of the West. It told the story of the laying of the Union and Central Pacific railroads and pointed the way to the dramatisation of Industry.*

1923

"Woman of Paris," *or* "Public Opinion" *as it was known in America, was Chaplin's only serious picture. It began a new cycle of social satire influencing Lubitsch, Stroheim, and later, Capra.*

WORLD FILM NEWS

in conjunction with

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(of the Group Theatre)

announces the formation of a

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on modern production trends during the winter evenings

★**FIRST SEASON, 1936-7,** will start in November, and classes will be held every Thursday evening at 8 p.m.

★**CLASSES** in Scenario, Script, Set-Design, Direction, Camera, Lighting, Trick-work, Sound, Cutting, Laboratory Work, Presentation and Publicity, Finance, etc.

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★**FILM SHOWS** will be held regularly to illustrate the Classes.

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followed by
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directed by
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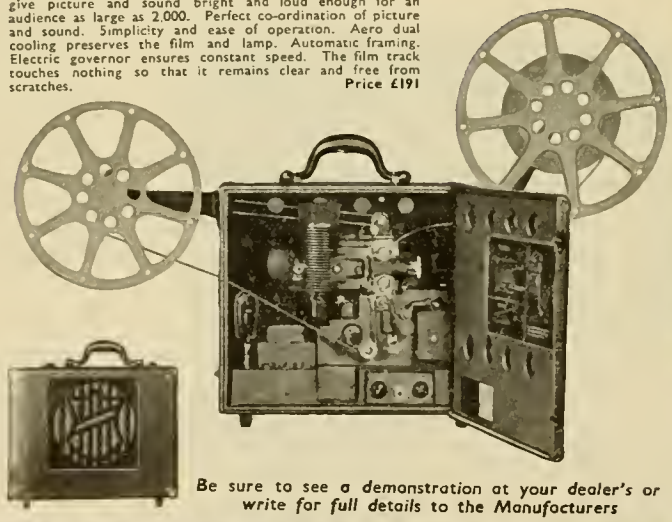

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THE NEW FILMOSOUND 138

Contained in a single case, which also accommodates a 1600 foot reel of film. In use, the combined projector and amplifier unit is removed from the case, while the cover serves as the baffle for the self-contained loud speaker. A new sound head for the reproducer. incorporates a rotating sound drum, flywheel and a floating idler. Voltages on exciter lamp and photocell are balanced automatically as the volume control is changed. Amplifier tubes are of the new metal type. New type of tilt device, and motor rewind. Two models, the 138-A, with 500 watt lamp and two film speeds (for running either sound or silent film), and the 138-B, with 750 watt lamp, which operates at sound speed only.

£138.

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS ★

School Films should Widen Experience

Findings of the London Film School

That there is now a large body of teachers in this country interested in the use of the film in schools was well evidenced by the enthusiasm of the eighty-odd students at this year's Film School, organised by the Educational Handwork Association in conjunction with the British Film Institute.

Demonstrations of films were given, and nine films were made by the students in a Film Production Course. The films were judged by a panel of critics comprising Miss M. Locket, Miss Evelyn Spice, Messrs. Basil Wright, Arthur Elton and William Farr. The films were of high standard and it was undoubted that the course had proved of great value to the students, many of whom had never before handled a cine camera. Films made included: *Safety First*, *Action of Heat on Potassium Chlorate*, *Hampstead Heath*, *Penguins*, *Sea-Lions*, and *Tower Bridge*.

The many discussions and debates offer the following conclusions: The function of the film in education can be divided into three categories: illustration, exposition and the widening of experience. Films for *illustration* purposes should be simple, short, sound or silent as the subject requires, and may, possibly, take the form of endless bands which, with the aid of a special attachment to the projector, may be run for as long as required. Such films need not be complete in themselves and may consist of several unrelated shots. Their purpose is to supplement the blackboard and the wall picture where these media fail. *There is need of a quick supply of such films.*

The *exposition* film will, in general, be longer, be complete in itself and be sound. Its purpose is *not* to supplant the teacher but to supplement his work.

The most important function of the film will be in the broadening of the usual curriculum to embrace the world outside the school. The films must represent experience which will help prepare the children to take their places in the community when required. For this purpose the ever-increasing number of documentary films will be useful, films dramatising the people of this country and the tasks they perform in the service of the community. Such films must be dramatic and emotional and made with all the artistry which goes to glorify the gangster and the cowboy.

It is emphasised that, even in schools which are conducted to a rigid examination syllabus, such films will always be useful in out-of-class-room hours.

As a result of the discussions Local Education Authorities are urged to form film libraries of their own, comprising all three types, and local teachers are urged to form groups for discussion on the model of the Scottish Educational Film Association.

G. B. S.

COLOURED FILMS AID DENTAL TEACHING

Mr. George Winter, President of the American Dental Association, has recently produced a remarkable colour talkie, by means of radiographs and models, on the difficult extraction of an impacted tooth—the third molar, whose roots may be curved back or front, or spread in several directions. This 35 mm. film takes an hour to run and is suitable for large audiences. Great use has already been made of it, justifying its expense and proving that such specialised demonstration films are invaluable for teaching certain aspects of Dentistry.

It also proves the advantage of colour for such film work. "The pathology of the soft tissues in the oral cavity, and the æsthetic considerations of normal and artificial teeth can be shown in colour and not in black and white; it plays an enormous role in conveying the finer differences to the audience," says a practitioner. "Moreover, coloured photography gives a more faithful representation than coloured models for teaching this particular and important side of modern dentistry."

The American Dental Association is expected to do more of such valuable pioneer work. It employs its own film officer and has plenty of funds at its disposal. Before making this colour talkie it was responsible for many silent black-and-white films on such subjects as the Surgical Treatment of Pyorrhœa, Immediate Insertion of Dentures and Difficult Extractions. Technique in Dentistry is at its finest in America, and its practitioners are eager to learn new methods and keep their knowledge up to date.

This is not always the case in England, although ample opportunities are given to postgraduates by the British Dental Association, at whose premises qualified practitioners may attend lectures and demonstrations each month. It too makes use of films whenever possible, but they do not enter into its general policy and are made and supplied by private members, or obtained through the International Medical Film Supply Library, and Kodak's Medical Library. Only three dental films for postgraduates are listed in the Film Institute's Catalogue of Medical Films.

Two are on Pyorrhœa and its treatment—one made by Mr. H. H. Stones, Professor of Dentistry at Liverpool University, and the other by Mr. C. Bowdler Henry. The third is a film on the dental aspect and treatment of Cleft Palate, made by Mr. Ernest A. Hardy. This little 16 mm. film gives a clear exposition of the methods employed to counteract cleft palate in both children and adults. It has been used for demonstrations and lectures in various parts of the country. Models and diagrams could not possibly have been used to the same effect.

Continuity of the various-phases is an enormous advantage in demonstrating a surgical method. The mind imagines the next step and is ready for it when it comes. There is a thoroughness too, and wealth of detail possible in film, which can be got across in a far shorter space than at a lecture given with the help of diagrams, models, and still photographs. The audience's attention is held the whole time; there are no stops to change slides, or draw an illustration.

The fact too, that it is impossible to see into a mouth without going right up to it and peering in, makes practical demonstration of technique out of the question for a considerable audience. By means of a mirror held in the mouth, both back and front of the rows of teeth can be photographed and the clefts in the palate demonstrated. Demonstration can also be made of the path of the condyles during the process of mastication, by means of radiographs taken of the joints and shown on phosphorescent screens. Masticatory movements are much talked about, but little is really known on the subject as yet.

Again, such films are self-explanatory, there is no language-bar to the actual pictures; foreign methods can be learned without having to travel abroad. And while duty on models and plaster casts for demonstration is high, there is none on educational films—a consideration to teachers and lecturers. It is not necessary, furthermore, to go to the expense of the full-size film.

W. H.

REPORT ON COMPETITION NO. 2

The best entries came very noticeably from Scotland, Wales and the Midlands. Subjects suggested range from Cricket to the Front Populaire, and from the Marquesas to the Welsh Eisteddfod.

First Prize to A. Mclaren Young (Edinburgh) for the following list:

1. Town Planning—past, present and future.
2. The Newspaper Racket.
3. World Population.
4. The New War.
5. Life of Allenby.

Second Prize to G. M. Bartlett (Glasgow) for the following list:

1. Dramatised Documentary—the London Passenger Transport Board.
2. Realist—the conditions under which able-bodied seamen work.
3. Dramatic Newsreel—the "Front Populaire."
4. Dramatic Newsreel—the situation in the Western Highlands.
5. Epic—a second and more grandly conceived "Industrial Britain."

Commended: R. Papineau (London).

This competition has proved so popular, and so many late entries are being received, that it is repeated this month.

MONTHLY COMPETITION

A prize of One Guinea and a second prize of half-a-guinea is offered for the best list of five subjects which permit of treatment in any of the following styles:

1. The dramatised documentary method of, say, *The Song of Ceylon*.
2. The dramatised journalism of *The March of Time*.
3. The realist method represented by *Men and Jobs* or *Louis Pasteur*.
4. The epic manner of *Rhodes of Africa*.

Subjects should deal with the present or the immediate past.

RULES AND CONDITIONS

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the competition in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to **Competitions, World Film News, Oxford House, Oxford Street, W.1.** Solutions must arrive by the first post on Monday, October 19th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym.

3. The Editors' decision is final. They reserve the right to print the whole or part of any entry sent in. MSS. cannot be returned. If no entries reach the required standard, no prize will be given.

René Clair's
NOVEL— "STAR TURN"
CHATTO & WINDUS
'Shows just those qualities of rich comic invention, acute sense of fantasy and uproarious satire which we associate with his films'—THE STAR

Script Vital to Amateur Films

By Peter Fraser

IN THE AUGUST number of *World Film News*, Andrew Buchanan dealt in a practical and lucid manner with the problem of shooting a village subject. While choice of subject is the amateur producer's first problem, his next is the writing of a script.

Sufficient emphasis cannot be laid on the importance of the script. Many of the less serious directors in the commercial 'shorts' as well as the amateur field are likely to under-estimate the importance of the script and many neglect writing a script at all. That is the primary reason for desultory treatment of a subject and the reason also for bad continuity. The results are evident in many of the travelogues and short one-reel pictures circulating in the cinemas at the present time.

Amateur story-writers would not be as likely to make this mistake: the plot in a fiction story is parallel with the continuity in a film. Just as a number of incidents strung together do not make a story, so it is not sufficient to string a number of excellently shot scenes together and call it a film: it is an insult to the art of cinema.

The stories of De Maupassant and Czechov are as good a guide as any to the sort of plot that is necessary for continuity. The parallel of story and film is adequate up to a point, but it is to be remembered that film is a different medium, that you have different tools to work with and that without actors the scope of subject-matter is limited.

The easiest and most often-used method of continuity in short films is the sequence of sunrise to sunset. This would suit such a subject as Andrew Buchanan's *Villoge* admirably although many might despise it as a film cliché, so often has it been done. It has not often been done well. Another easy continuity idea for *Village* is the work-day: another the seasons as they affect a village; still another, the harvest. All these subjects have a beginning, a solid middle and a satisfactory ending. But if you would be more ambitious take a rainstorm as your theme, open with village activities at mid-day, the open-air stalls, the flowers on the window-sills, the children playing in the streets; bring on your rainstorm with every trick the camera is capable of and show the effects on the things you have already filmed. Finish the film with the sun breaking, the children coming out again to sail their boats in the gutter, the sun shining on the market fruit-stalls, and the happiness of faces. A simple subject such as this is well worth doing if it is done really well. The subject may be trivial in a sense, but if you treat it really well you will have interwoven something of the sunshine and shade of human temperament. Incidentally in this subject you have every opportunity to exploit through the camera a keen sense of observation and if you have not *thot* you are no director.

In the third sequence write down and choose very carefully the images you wish to use but be sure to connect them with what has gone before. Remember always you are dealing with a village. Shoot the raindrops not on vague trees or bushes but rather on the faces of the children running back to school or on the window-panes of the cottages or the vegetables in the back gardens.

"Sun shining on the fruit-stalls"

"Rain . . . on the window-panes" (*Publicity Films*)

"Every possible reaction to rain . . . "

"After the rainstorm . . . " (*Travel Association*)

In the actual script-writing of this theme, first of all write down the rough story of the film. From this compile your titles and make them as few and as short as possible with the intention of scrapping any that in the finished film are found to be unnecessary. Then take your first sequence. If it is a description of forenoon in the village, think of all the activities which can be affected by the rainstorm. Choose, if possible, a market day, for you will have plenty of opportunity to show tarpaulins being hurriedly put up and shoppers finding shelter underneath. It would be a good thing to arrange your rainstorm to coincide with the school lunch-hour so that you have added activity. Show then in your first sequence the children at lessons in the schoolroom. Show also women whitening front-door steps, for after the rain has come they will have to do it over again. Show, if you like, a man watering his garden and in close-up the parched soil of the garden. Show washing being hung on the clothes-line, for you are going to have a fine scurry of activity there when the rain comes on. Put all these and as many suitable images as you can think of in the first sequence of your script. Then make a careful choice of the best.

Now bring on the storm. Show in close-up the water splashing into the crevices of the parched soil or the window-pots. Show in close-up the irritated faces of the women taking in their washing. For contrast show the contented face of the gardener as he puts away his hose. Show children in their wellingtons walking in the gutter and mothers scolding them from the door-steps. Think of every possible reaction to rain and do not forget the cats and the poultry and the pigeons. Use the most interesting and most pictorial.

In your script make a careful selection of these images, for if you are aiming at a one-reel film you should devote about a third of the total footage to the rainstorm, a third to the opening sequence, and a third to the ending. This apportionment of footage can be varied as you like but keep it in mind when writting the script and have good reasons for your decision on the length of each sequence.

The future cutting of the film should always be kept in mind while scripting, and angles of shots should be noted. In the sequence of the rising of the storm, the impression should be given by the cutting that the rainstorm is becoming more and more heavy. It will be necessary therefore to provide for this in the script. Take a series of shots that are to express this and make sure that each successive shot conveys the effect of more rainfall than the previous one. Avoid an anti-climax by *under-stating* the rain in the first few shots. If possible make it torrential in the last few.

As far as angles are concerned, it would be useful to make small drawings of the proposed shots and try to visualise the effect when filmed.

A last word—remember to relate every shot in your script to the central theme and disregard the temptation to include meaningless shots however beautiful. And finally, when you are satisfied with the script take a copy with you when shooting and *shoot to it*.

Newsreels Show Political Bias

Editing of Spanish War Scenes discloses partisan views

THE NEWSREEL CAMERAMAN is the new war-correspondent. He represents all the bravery of the great journalists of fifty years ago, who sketched—for they had no cameras—scenes of fighting on the battlefield itself. He brings to life, more vividly than any words, the plight of common people whose daily life has been suddenly spotlit by the drama of war.

But what happens when the material he has shot gets to the editorial cutting-bench? A check on recent newsreel tendencies shows that the old impartial presentation of news is disappearing. A partisan spirit has arisen. There is a strong measure of political bias. And it is time to face up to the implications behind this vital change of style.

The brilliant work by the newsreel companies on the Abyssinian invasion and now on the Spanish civil war was at first sufficiently sensational in its presentation of the violence and grimness of the modern battlefield to be simply the highspot of every issue. But as time goes on, it is a little depressing to find such material pushed down to the lower level of baby-shows and beauty parades. On such vital situations this banal and negligent treatment should be avoided at all costs.

But the question of partisanship raises a much more serious problem.

Up till quite recently the Newsreels presumably regarded themselves mainly as entertainment and information caterers (chiefly entertainment). Their aim was to serve up a popular hors d'oeuvre of the week's sport and any other items of snob-value, thrill-value, or amusement-value. They would indignantly have repudiated accusations of propaganda or the deliberate plugging of controversial issues in a one-sided manner.

But almost imperceptibly the new racket has started. In recent newsreel issues about Spain the pro-rebel bias has been too obvious to escape notice, as witness a note on this page and also the fact that the Rothermere-controlled British Movietonews blatantly uses the terms 'Red' and 'Anti-Red.'

This propagandist element in the newsreels is bound to have a telling effect on the average audience. Shots of unkempt militia-man contrasted with Mola's smart regulars, backed by a carefully worded and tendentious commentary, impel the innocent middle-classes to side with the better-dressed. And when the film uses its subtle technique of assertion by implication, the cumulative effect of atrocities and desecrations (nearly always by Government forces), becomes terrific. Many people have noticed the fact that newsreels which in previous issues had been well sprinkled with 'Red' atrocity stories presented the fall of Badajoz without reference to the mass executions of prisoners which took place there.

With typical guilt-complexes several newsreels have been careful to proclaim their impartiality. Items complimentary to the Government forces are indeed not unknown. But this does not alter the fact that no intelligent person can fail to notice the bias and political partisanship which is so rapidly establishing itself on the newsreel screens.

Whether this bias is to Right or Left, it is in any case something to be regarded as dangerous. The public must be warned. And, what is more, impartiality must be regained. If the newsreels themselves are unwilling or unable to re-attain it, there will very soon—if there is not already—be a crying need for a truly-balanced newsreel, which will give both sides of the picture with equal fairness, avoid violent political lobbying on public screens, and in general keep a check on the more unscrupulous of its contemporaries.

If cinema is to have its Yellow Press, it must also have its "Times" and its "Manchester Guardian."

The whole problem is recommended to the newly formed Film Council for its early attention.

The "Blonde Amazon"

The Gaumont British newsreel in its issue of August 13th has, I think, made a new and very dangerous departure from the rule of impartiality, which we are led to believe they have imposed on themselves, in its presentation of a witness of the Spanish rebellion. The lady interviewed, described for us as the "Blonde Amazon," was looked after by Government troops and recounts the stories with which they regaled her—of burning 4 fascists in a car, executing 70 officers with a machine gun, and so on. She herself had seen a church burned down in front of her hotel; and she tells how the women-fighters were the worst of all.

Now we have no right to doubt this particular lady's word: but it must be pointed out that although she was selected from some hundreds of refugees from Spain, many of whom have an entirely different story to tell, she was not a witness at first hand of the most important part of her story and had apparently no knowledge of Spain to give any importance to her account.

CLIPS

Maurice van de Kerckhove, camera operative for France Actualité Gaumont, secured a big scoop when he photographed the fall of Irun. The reel was shewn with full credit in every Paris Newsreel theatre, preceded by a title begging the public to refrain from demonstration. In 300 feet French Gaumont were able to give a more dramatic and vivid description of Spain's Civil War than any number of newspaper articles could do.

* * *

Skilful editing is a rarity in a newsreel; witty editing almost unknown. All credit accordingly to Gaumont British for their feature contrasting American and British styles of public speaking. Sequences from past newsreels were transformed in the cutting into brisk satiric comedy. Only Lloyd George was allowed to keep his dignity, only Bernard Shaw to make his own joke.

The choosing of an unreliable but sensational witness is deplorable but perhaps understandable. The Gaumont British newsreel editor has however gone to considerable pains to give verisimilitude to her story by cutting in, at the appropriate and telling moments, shots of a car burning, a church burning, fierce-looking civilian soldiers their fists raised in salute, women fighting and the noise of machine guns, which in conjunction with the interview has become straight anti-government atrocity propaganda. This method of cutting to stock shots is the normal method of giving reality to the fiction film; but when it is used to give reality to what is only a witness's statement in a newsreel film which we are in the habit of accepting as objective it becomes deadly dangerous.

BRIAN CROSTHWAITE

Scenes too gruesome for public Showing

Concern for the alleged squeamishness of the British public has prevented much of the most vivid material of the Spanish Civil War being included in the newsreels. By the courtesy of Pathé Gozette 'W.F.N.' was able to see several hundred feet of withheld material which is considered too gruesome for the public palate.

Pathé man-on-the-spot, R. Brutin, orrived at Badajoz with the Franco troops and secured amazing shots of the town's destruction. Scarcely a house or building remained unscathed, and particularly gruesome were the rows of burnt, charred bodies littering the streets, eloquent testimony to the bitterness of the fighting.

Brutin's adventures in Abyssinia (where he claims to have been the first newsreel man to arrive) and in Spain should make a good book one day.

FILMS AVAILABLE FOR SOCIETY PROGRAMMES

World Film News has compiled a list of films available, definitely not available, and likely to be available for film societies before the end of the season. The list, when more complete, will be issued to film societies as part of World Film News' service.

Films imported by the London Film Society or booked through a renter by the Academy, Curzon, Studio One or other cinemas are not usually immediately available for provincial film societies—for very practical reasons. Renters hope—often against hope—for commercial bookings in other London cinemas and in the provinces. Until every channel has been explored, few renters will consider film society bookings. Paramount decided three years ago not to take any film society bookings at any time and have not yet been persuaded to reverse that ruling.

In the following lists all films have a Censor's Certificate unless stated otherwise. Bookings may be made directly through the renters, but we suggest that better terms are obtained if bookings are made through the Federation. It is particularly advisable that all societies wishing to show *Die Ewige Maske* this season should communicate with the English or Scottish Federations immediately, giving several dates. The Federations will also be able to advise and book films at very short notice in cases of emergency.

Feature Films Definitely Available for Booking Now.

Bonne Chance (Denning)
So Ended a Great Love (Denning)
Le Dernier Milliardaire (Denning)
Marie (Reunion)
Remous (Denning)
Episode (Reunion)
Liebesmelodie (Reunion)
Atalante (Film Society)
Front Page (United Artists)
La Maternelle (G.F.D.)
Doctor Mabuse (Famous Films)
Hauptman von Koepernick (Int. P.)
Turksib (Denning)
Bed and Sofa (L.C.C. cert. only, Forum)
Potemkin (L.C.C. cert. only, Forum)
Storm Over Asia (L.C.C. only, Forum)
The Living Corpse (silent, Sherwood E. F.)
Unfinished Symphony (original German version—Denning)
Marchand d'Armour (Denning)
Student of Prague (Denning)
Maskerade (Reunion)
Three Songs of Lenin (Film Society)
Day of a Great Adventure (Film Society)
The Virtuous Isidore (International Productions)
Kameradschaft (A.P.D.)
M (Famous Films)
White Hell of Pitz Palu (G.F.D.)
Deserter (now Cert. A.; through Forum cinema)
New Babylon (Forum)
October (L.C.C. cert. only, Forum)
Cain (synchronised, M.G.M.)
Night Mail (A.B.F.D.)
Song of Ceylon (Denning)

Films not yet available, but possibly available in January.

Little Paper People (A.B.F.D.)
Wedad, the Slave
Good Little Monkeys (G.B.D.)
Die Ewige Maske (Tobis)
Der Kribbebijter
Roof Tops of London (Strand)
Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (colour cartoon)
Maria Bashkirtseff
Nursery Island (G.B.D.)
Merlusse (Tobis)
Crime et Chatiment (Tobis)
Cover to Cover (Strand)
Fishing Village (G.P.O.)

Films Definitely Not Available (mostly expired rights).

Le Million, Blue Light, Blue Angel, Italian Straw Hat, A Nous la Liberté, La Bandera, Mother, Earth, Marx Brothers' early films, *Trouble in Paradise, The Great Consoler.*

Short Films Available.

Great Train Robbery (B.Film I.)
Under the Water (Denning)
Dragon of Wales (Kinograph)
Workers and Jobs (A.B.F.D.)
What the Newsreel shows (Denning)
Air Port (G.B.D.)
Windmill in Barbados (A.B.F.D.)
Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns (Kino)
Shipyard (G.B.D.)
Colour Box (G.P.O.)
Rainbow Dance (G.P.O.)
The Town of Tomorrow (Denning)
Coal Face (A.B.F.D.)
6.30 Collection (A.B.F.D.)
Secrets of Life Series (G.B.I.)
Face of Britain (G.B.D.)
Wharves and Strays (U.A.)
Ship of the Ether (colour cartoon—Phillips Radio)
Joie de Vivre (Reunion)
Immortal Swan (I.S.Product)
Streamline (G.B.)
Power in the Highlands (G.B.)
Douro (Viking)
Fun on the Farm (Cadbury—colour cartoon)
Carmen (colour cartoon—Reunion)
The Ringmaster (puppet film—Kinograph)
Fairy of the Phone (G.P.O.)
Peace Film (Dofil)
The Mine (G.B.I.)
Weather Forecast (A.B.F.D.)
Granton Trawler (A.B.F.D.)
For All Eternity (M.G.M.)
Papageno (Reiniger—B.F.I.)
Private Life of the Gannets (G.B.I.)
Austria Beautiful (Reunion)
Oil Symphony (Reunion)
Soap Bubbles (Film Society)
Industrial Britain Group (G.B.D.)
Shipcraft (G.B.)
Dry Dock (G.B.)
Milestones (M.G.M.)
Birth of the Robot (Gasparcolor)
Horse Laughs (colour cartoon—Reunion)
Expansion of Germany (3 min. film—G.B.I.)
Death on the Road (G.B.E.)
Glimpses of the U.S.S.R. (1 sound and 2 silent shorts—Strand). Various Silly Symphonies, Mickey Mouse and other coloured cartoons.

Programme Making

There is art in making up a good programme—to give sufficient variety at each meeting to please the highbrow, the not-quite-so-high-but-intelligent-brows and to help the newcomers to appreciate film society standards. No film society committee has ever been able to book all the films it would like to show in any given season, but if the lighter feature films are kept for those emergencies which are bound to occur, and the tension needed for the careful watching of the best productions is relieved by a colour cartoon and soothed by a smoothly running documentary or nature film, at the end of the season the list of films shown should make good reading.

Several film societies devote one meeting a season to revivals of silent films—sound being provided by gramophone records, organ or orchestra. An occasional double-feature programme, a meeting devoted to films tracing the rise of the colour film, a one-director programme will provide interesting variations. In the case of revivals of films which have no Censor's certificate it is often possible to show these films on 16mm. stock at a local hall on a weekday evening. *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* is now only available on sub-standard film and can be introduced by a speaker who will later lead a discussion on the film.

The London Film Society has been passing through a very difficult period during the prolonged illness of Miss Mary Brown. When her resignation became inevitable some further delay was caused by the absence of members of the London Film Society Council on holiday.

The new secretary, Miss Barbara Frey, was for two years secretary to Miss Elsie Cohen at the Academy Cinema, and has worked in the offices of Columbia Pictures.

The London Film Society is issuing its programme within the next few days and hopes to hold its first meeting early in November.

We congratulate the London Film Society and Miss Frey and wish her and her assistant all success.

FILM EDITORS only, are invited to post us the coupon below and obtain **FREE**, two of our Film Marking Pencils (Positive and Negative) also a useful Vest Pocket Book.

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Amateur Group Activities

World Film News invites the amateur cinematographic movement to make use of its columns. News will be welcomed. All copy for this page must reach W.F.N. by the 10th of each month.

BLACKHEATH FILM CLUB has a membership of 148. Activities range from the making and showing of every type of film to technical discussions and social events. All studio and theatre equipment has been made and assembled by members. Club productions (16 mm. and 9.5 mm.) will be loaned to other clubs.

BRADFORD CINE CIRCLE arranges lectures, discussions and projection evenings and would like to exchange 9.5 mm. productions with other societies.

BRONDESBURY CINE CIRCLE, now in its fifth season, has a well-equipped studio and projection theatre seating 55 people. Eight productions are available for loan or exchange.

CANTERBURY CINE SOCIETY. Film plays, lectures and projection evenings are the chief activities of this Society, which has three 9.5 mm. productions to exchange.

CARDIFF AMATEUR CINE SOCIETY—formed this year—has made a good start with two films in production and is already spreading a leaven of film-consciousness in Cardiff by its monthly guest nights at which films are shown and discussed and lectures given.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY. The monthly displays were resumed at Millicent Fawcett Hall on first Wednesday in September, when Rev. Dom Wilfred Upson, O.S.B., gave a film-lecture entitled "A Parish Priest and his Ciné Camera." Fr. Upson's film might well be described as a Catholic Newsreel extending over an indefinite period.

The most important development the Society has yet shown is the new C.F.S. Mime Unit. The formalised action, the essence of the mediæval Miming Plays is believed by the C.F.S. to be ideal as a medium for religious films.

CINE-SOUND PRODUCTIONS (Beckenham) have made several films of local interest with running commentaries on disc which it will be pleased to loan to other societies. For the coming season a costume play based on the Greek legend of Perseus and Andromeda is planned.

DONCASTER AMATEUR FILM SOCIETY used its foundation members, mostly acting enthusiasts, to make two costume and historical films. "Healing Through the Ages," propaganda for and in aid of the Doncaster Royal Infirmary will shortly be available for other societies and future plans lean rather to the making of short local interest and documentary films.

DUNDEE CINE SOCIETY, founded in 1931, aims at co-operation among users of ciné-apparatus and is not as yet a production unit.

HAMILTON AND DISTRICT CINE SOCIETY recently acquired a studio and is at work on a documentary film.

KENTON AMATEUR CINE SOCIETY arranges projection and technical evenings for its members and hopes to work as a unit shortly.

LEDBURY AMATEUR CINE SOCIETY is a comparatively new society which provides local organisation for the production of films, delivering and holding of lectures and demonstrations, and social events calculated to advance the interest of Amateur Film Production and Film production in general. There are three 9.5 mm. films available for other societies.

MATLOCK CINE CLUB has a special course in cinematography for newcomers and arranges visits to the International Amateur Cinematography contests. A local hiking film is in production.

METEOR FILM PRODUCING SOCIETY (Glasgow) holds weekly meetings for film production, lectures and projection. The Society is making a film for the Glasgow branch of the Y.M.C.A. and is to display its films to the Curtain Theatre and the Clarkston Literary Society. Members may have on loan, free of charge, copies of all the Society's productions and may use the studio privately for filming or projection. There are seven films available for other societies.

OLDHAM CINE SOCIETY arranges projection meetings and lectures and is at work on a drama of local historical origin.

PALMERS GREEN CINE SOCIETY concentrates on experimenting in sound, colour and film processing and titling. Four documentaries have been produced but are not at the moment available for other societies.

SALISBURY AMATEUR CINE SOCIETY are willing to loan two comedy 9.5 mm. films and a newsreel "Silver Jubilee in Salisbury."

"SEEALL FILM SOCIETY" (Loughton) is producing a series of Gazette films on 9.5 mm. stock and will lend them to other clubs.

SUDBURY FILM SOCIETY, formed in 1932, is the first amateur film society to be affiliated to the London Film Institute Society. Members of the Sudbury Society may now borrow films from the LFIS Film Library, they obtain special rates for LFIS meetings, a monthly copy of the London Film Guide and the Monthly Film Bulletin and other literature issued from time to time. The Society shows every kind of film on sub-standard stock and is always ready to help local institutions and societies in the arrangement and presentation of film programmes. Plans for the coming season include the production of a brief story account of Robert Owen's work among factory children.

TEES-SIDE CINE CLUB has made a projection box, sound room, proscenium and apparatus for post-synchronisation. There are four 16 mm. films available and work is about to start on a comedy, a documentary and a cartoon.

UDDINGSTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL AMATEUR FILM SOCIETY. Fifty boys and girls aged 14–17 each contribute twopence a week towards the cost of production of their own films, film classics are shown regularly and critical visits are paid to outstanding films; production has been of a very high standard. "Preparatory Class" (350 feet, 16 mm.), an anti-war propaganda film, won a prize last January at the Scottish Amateur Film Festival. After a road-safety film for children of 5–8 years, the Society is producing a film contrasting the beauty of the countryside with the wretchedness of the depressed areas. "Preparatory Class" may be hired.

WIMBLEDON CINE CLUB aims at encouraging the use of cinematography in all its branches 'by everybody, for everything.' It offers advice, instruction, competitions, loans of books, apparatus, films, magazines, and has twenty-one films available for exchange or hire.

Tyneside Opposes Double Feature

At the third Annual Meeting of the Tyneside Film Society held at Newcastle the following resolution was moved by the Chairman, Mr. Ernest Dyer, and carried unanimously:—

"That this General Meeting of the Tyneside Film Society, which is anxious to see the widest possible distribution of good films, regrets the anomaly of the Quota Act whereby many British-made films of the documentary class are considered ineligible for "quota." It trusts that this anomaly, which in effect bans from the British screen films dealing with the British countryside, will be rapidly removed, either by administrative action or by legislation."

In moving the resolution, Mr. Dyer pointed out that the Quota Act was at present interpreted in such a manner that many first-class short films, especially those dealing with the English countryside, rarely reached a public cinema screen.

The Secretary of the Society, Mr. M. C. Pottinger, moved the following resolution which was also unanimously carried:—

"That this Society strongly deprecates the prevalence of two-feature cinema programmes, which militate against the development of the production of documentaries and other short films of serious or intelligent purpose, a field which represents this country's greatest contribution to contemporary cinema. Further, that the Society regrets that it is unable to support as it would wish good short films which are not advertised by local exhibitors, and appeals to exhibitors to realise that there is a large public on Tyneside prepared to support short films of good quality."

Mr. Pottinger pointed out in his remarks that every leading "first-run" cinema in the district had adopted the "two-feature" policy, which meant in practice that one feature, the principal feature, might or might not be reasonably good in quality, while the second feature was practically always a second-rate "fill-up," which insulted the intelligence of the audience. Why was the second feature necessary when so many excellent shorts were available? The spread of news-theatres was clear evidence of a public demand for more short films.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Amateur Film Unit. An amateur film group was started this year as the result of a show of amateur films arranged by the parent body. Two documentary films are in production, one on 9.5 mm. stock showing the rise of Liverpool as a port, and a 16 mm. film dealing with the subject of ferry traffic on the river Mersey. A series of meetings has been arranged at which the prize-winning films from the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers will be shown.

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY. Although the Society cannot yet publish its programmes for the season, plans for extended activities and services have been approved by the Committee. A monthly guide to films being shown at the local cinemas is to be issued by a sub-committee who are to attend trade shows by the courtesy of film-renters. An extra meeting is being arranged at which films produced by the G.P.O. Film Unit are to be shown, and the Society has been asked to supply lecturers for three local societies. A special meeting is to be arranged in November to celebrate the fiftieth meeting of the Society which is now in its sixth season.

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"I am notoriously old-fashioned. I like to sit in a cinema and not have to think about anything."—*C. A. Lejeune.*

* * *

"It's very embarrassing to be pointed out like the engine of a motor-car."—*Gary Cooper.*

* * *

"I have done nothing—absolutely nothing—of which I felt that Shakespeare might disapprove."—*Dr. Paul Czinner.*

* * *

"I can imagine nothing quite so dull as a broadcast chess commentary."—*Gorry Allighan.*

* * *

"It has been a terrible film for Alex and me."—*Charles Laughton.*

CAN YOU BEAT THIS, ARTHUR DENT?

Publicity men, please note this genuine extract from an Indian Film Company's advertisement.

"AND HERE IS A SUBLIME MESSAGE . . . YOU CONSERVATIVES ! ! OBJECTIVES ! ! and RADICALS ! ! ! PLEASE
Why not rejoice more? Count up your Golden Mercies, Count up your opportunities to do good, Count up your exceeding great and precious promises, Count up your joys of heirship to an in-curriptible inheritancs (sic) and then
MARCH ON THE ROAD HEAVENWARD SINGING SANGEET'S MOST
Revolutionary-Musical-EPISODES from their latest

THE CALL OF THE SOUL

The story of the CALL OF THE SOUL is not imaginative. It is entirely based on real incidents in life: Most tragic and eventful: of a once happy and blessed family of Bengal; but now absolutely ruined. The Chief Characters of the Story are still alive, and being so compelled by the gruesome and absurd LAWS of The Society and Those Orthodox Pandits, who are responsible for misleading innocent persons by preaching glittering sermons (hopelessly misinterpreted) from our 'HOLY SHASTRAS' are leading shameful but pitiable lives (having had no other alternative), the one having drowned his life and Soul in drinking and the other having become a Public Street Girl. What a tragedy of events and what a Compulsion?

THE CALL OF THE SOUL"

* * *

WITHOUT COMMENT

Extract from monthly report of the Bombay Board of Film Censors:—

"MADAME FASHION. In Reel 3 curtail the scenes showing Niranjan removing the jewellery from the almirah of Sheeladevi, leaving only a suggestion that the jewellery has been stolen (17½ feet).

"In Reel 9 delete the dialogue uttered by Jagadeshkumar, 'Once Sheeladevi is induced to lose her chastity, she will become my easy prey.' (7½ feet)."

TOOTS PARAMOUR CALLING

Howdy, boys and girls! Here's your Toots again, absolutely bursting with hot news. So here we go.

* * *

Make-up, f'r instance . . there's a dirty job for a girl! . . . I spend hours and hours myself every dewy dawn patching up the Paramour features. . . but Oh, My! let me tell you it's nothing to what Eulalia Butterscotch has to suffer in Bragmore's new super *The Gay Gendarme* . . . First of all Ogden Hagrider, ace face-filler from across the water, runs over her face with a currycomb dipped in glue . . . then comes the lather of papier-maché (*literally* laid on with a trowel, my dears) . . and on top of that Ogden gets going properly, and gives her *reel* face . . . and when I tell you he has to use boot-buttons for her eyes, 3 lbs of reinforced marshmallows for the nose and 800 compressed morello cherries for those world-famed lips, well, I *ask* you . . . And then they stitch her into 24 yards of super-gusseted velveteen, bung her into a yak-hair wig . . . and there she is, all set to play another scene as Langouste, beautiful, treacherous, and a spy . . .

* * *

Opposite her of course is Albert Museum, that veteran trouper, known to his friends as The Devil Toupée . . . And how too authentic he looks as Napoleon XVIIIth . . . in fact I gave him a whacking great curtsy as soon as I saw him (and curtsying ain't so easy in my studio skirtings) . . . "Zut!" says Albert, "Levez-vous, Toots Pompadour!" . . .

* * *

And what a set. . . . Genuine marble from floor to ceiling . . . and the hydrangeas! . . . you've no idea! . . . I had a chatlet with Alfonso Emetico the designer, but as he no speeka da English and I no speeka da Levantine, we didn't get very far ... but he kissa Toots' hand lovely . . .

* * *

And now ring up the curtain . . . here's your Toots in festive mood, bombazined to the eyes for the premiere of *Was She Pushed?*. . .what a crush in the foyer of the Palaceum! . . . you simply didn't know whether you were a Sashalight or a Duchess . . . and I lost my Souvenir Programme (printed on art georgette) in the fierce fight for the champagne . . . we had speeches from Mose McDougall and Lord Wrasse—the birdies say he's going to marry ravishing Gloria Musquash—and after that came the Big Epic . . . I didn't know whether to laugh or cry, specially during the Cabaret scene, when Gloria sings *It's Lurst, not Lurve You're Giving me*, and the moon floats down through the ceiling and turns into a mob of cuties dressed in the neatest lace pyjamas. . . .

* * *

SHORT SNIPS . . . Osric Dunks building five more cinemas at Little Bubblington . . . says if we must have redundancy then for goodness' sake let's make a real job of it . . .

* * *

. . . Huck Hicklecups, Number One globe-trotter, removed to nursing home after seeing through the 220,000-feet he shot in Pago Pago . . . Von Splitz, Huck's publicity agent, issues statement that stuff was too good to be true, makes all previous gorilla films look like the fakes they were . . .

Latest Shakespeare offering will be Super-blistertone's *King Henry IVth Part Two* with an all-animal cast . . . Mogsy, the wonder turtle, to play Falstaff . . .

* * *

Robespierre Bumpoff's latest documentary breaking all records at the Ritz, Muddlehampton . . . reveals social implications of bicycle spokes . . . novel sound-score superimposes University Extension Lectures on top of Orchestrated Farm Noises, with Overtones of Trombontage devised by talented Daisy Dripp, zith-champion of New South Wales . . .

IMAGINARY INTERVIEWS. No. 2.

Cockalorum's French Correspondent gets going—

"I interview today Mr. Schpenck who arrive in Paris to sell Horribletone apparate. He tell me, 'You are the 1st journalist who round to me visit has made. The *World Film News*? Yes, I know him . . . It is the one paper . . . I was coming sometime in making a talking film by France but I was not being certain if the customers will be enought many."

There was to blow in on the morning of yesterday who than my old friend Mons. Zut who as you shall know it was being one of the so very big trade men . . . So I ask him is it true he buy all the big French companies . . . To which Mons. Zut was throwing the manuscript down on the floor and saying, 'No it is not true . . . If you print it I will blow your nose by dam' (This you may redact as the exclusive of *World Film News* the paper so good).

DAVE ROBSON SAYS:—

"Have you ever heard a gnat's knees knocking?—a midget fidget?—or a mosquito shuffle?

"No, not yet—but you soon will because a new system of noiseless recording, plus a supersensitive microphone is opening up vast new possibilities.

"By stretching over the face of an up-turned microphone a sheet of taut holophane smeared with a coating of mucilage and placing upon it various insect pests and vermin, many discoveries are being made and the sounds recorded.

"A hungry flea provides thrills for all: its walk, sniff, bore, puncture and suction followed by a grunt of satisfaction is really sensational.

"A gnat makes that buzzing sound with his wings, but place a sprinkling of Keatings near him, and you will plainly hear his hairy knees knock.

"Yes, you can hear a jelly-fish breathe, a fly flit, a bluebottle warble, and when this new real noiseless recorder is installed at Denham, peppermint creams will be barred from the studio!"

CHILDREN'S CORNER

"That's good," said Korda quietly. "Print it." (From *The Observer.*)

LORUM

WALT WHITMAN VISITS A MOVIE PALACE

Listen!

I sing the praises of the latter-day temple
I admire the plush carpets ankle-deep, the marble stairs and the fountains
Spraying cool water into the artificially-scented air;
My eyes goggle at gorgeous uniforms concealing Cockney commisionaires behind a barricade of velvet;

I am overwhelmed

The plaster pillars soar upwards to a ceiling unaccountably and improbably decorated with beech-leaves and grapes
From all sides
The boom resounds of the welkin-smashing Wurlitzer
(And from what dark abyss rises and falls the organist?
He rejoices daily
In the noise and the limelight).

All around me the brave and lovely inhabitants of a great city
No longer inarticulate
Make tentative love in the dim pink luminosity of Holophane

And now look! The silk curtains part
I witness
A newsreel about the laying of foundation-stones and speeches to soldiers, a perculiar cartoon in colour, a perfectly intolerable second-feature, and finally the big film which I view first with disfavour and later with all the blind and inarticulate rage of boredom.

Oh Mankind
Oh Humanity marching ever onwards
I have been to a movie.

W.F.N's aureole of birdseed is this month happily awarded to critic Sydney Carrol:—

"It is not my Rosalind, I doubt if it is Shakespeare's, but it is a wee bit of personal radiance, an item of joy, an imp of delicate enchantment, an inspirer of sonnets."

SNOOKS GREISER, "W.F.N.'s" cathartic lift-boy, succeeded the other day in trapping the Cockalorum Editor himself, by entangling his trousers in the gate. The following chat then took place:

Snooks. "So you didn't get many replies to your first monthly competition, huh?"
Editor. "Please, please, I'm in a hurry."
Snooks. "I expect you had to write all the entries yourself, huh?"
Editor. "Please, please, *please*."
Snooks. "Still, maybe it's taught you not to be so highbrow, or has it? . . . I see you've torn your trousers. Why didn't you wait till I got the gate open for you? Third floor —bicycles, sportswear, perfumes, perfumes, perfumes and World Film News."

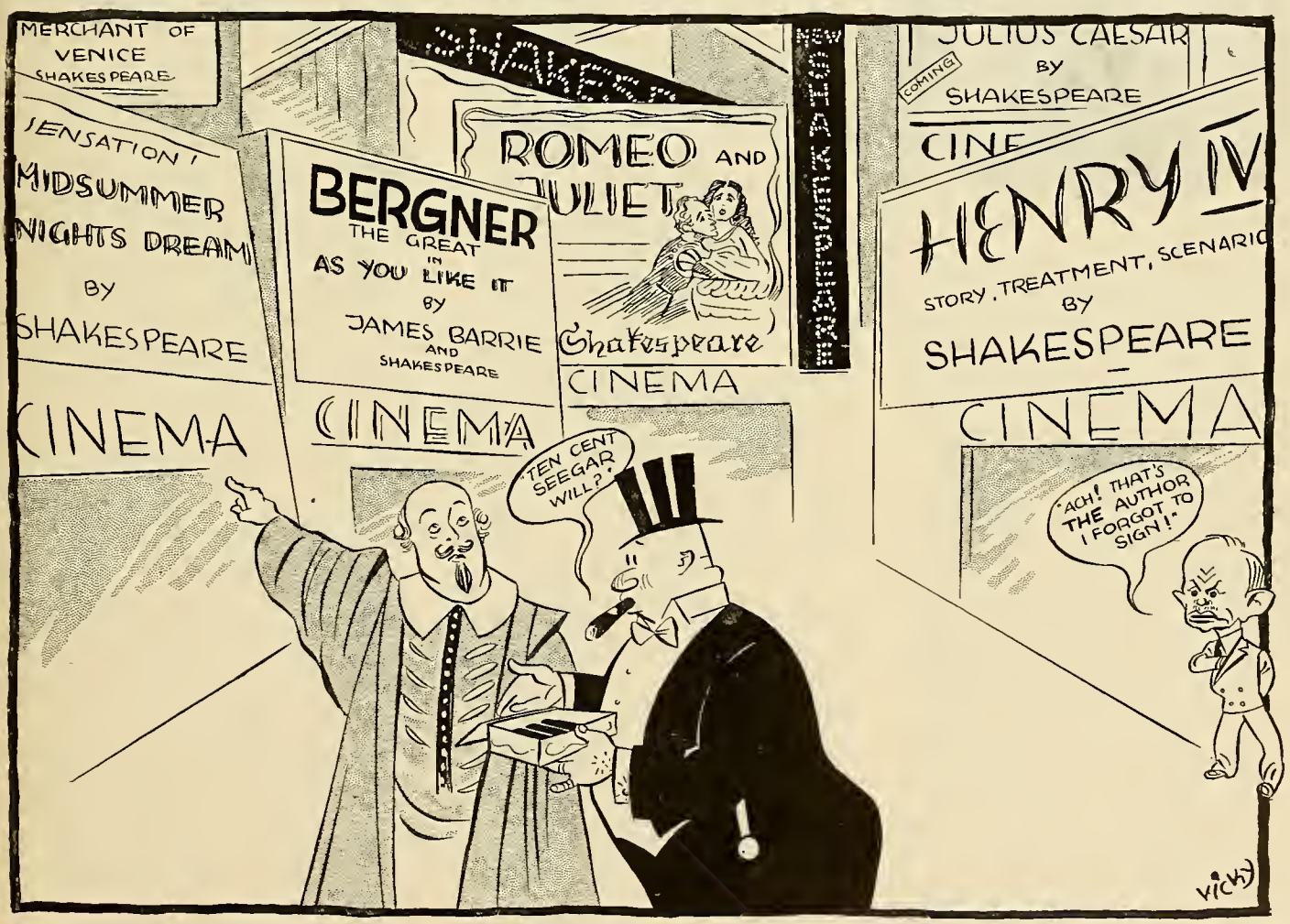
* * *

A Rose by any other Name

"Asthma," she said, making the word seem somehow exotic. (*From an interview with Marlene Dietrich*).

"*My own little epiglottis, my stomach-pump, I'm just measly about yuh*

"*Ach! Leave me to my mumps . . . Ay tank Ay take a tonic.*"



". . . And some have greatness thrust upon them."

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RENAISSANCE BY RADIO

Milhaud Wants Decentralisation

DARIUS MILHAUD, famous French composer, made a deep impression on his audience when he recently lectured at the Studio Bertrand in Paris.

Milhaud is celebrated not only for the inventive ingenuity of his music and for his bold use of novel instruments, but more especially for his creative grasp of the new forms opened to music by radio and film. A packed hall therefore waited to hear him speak on "The moral and financial help which the new machine-media, and especially radio, can lend to music and musicians."

Darius Milhaud

Milhaud opened with a fierce attack on film producers in general. He denounced the majority of producers as lacking the small amount of intelligence necessary to seize "the grand opportunities which music offers to the sound-film." The result was that the film, possessed of universal powers of guiding public taste, had so far failed utterly to fulfil its obvious task. And since one medium had practically dropped out as far as music was concerned, radio must take upon itself a double duty.

Milhaud then settled down to a constructive discussion of the relationship between music and radio. The pioneer work of broadcasting had, he said, laid the foundations of a liking for music, and the liking was now developing into a need. Instead of emptying the concert-halls and replacing personal attendance by armchair listening, radio is sending a new public flocking to the concert box-office. The microphone has brought into existence a new musical community. The more advanced sections of that community are now conscious of the barrier which the microphone cannot help setting up between living performance and listener; it is the musicians' job to satisfy this growing need for direct contact with music.

"We must exploit this widening of the musical horizon," he declared, "and our exploitation must take the form of pressing for decentralisation. Our great provincial towns are demanding, and ought to have, a fuller aesthetic life of their own. We must gradually break down the prestige of Paris as a musical centre for the benefit of the rest of France. Broadcasting will help us enormously in this task. For in fostering the need for music we can hope to see the next generation building up in each provincial centre an orchestra, a choir, a chamber music society and an opera company.

"If we start decentralising our music now," claimed Milhaud, "we shall open the way to success to those composers who are finding it increasingly difficult to get their work accepted for concert performance. Through the modern media, and especially radio, we are going to bring about a musical renaissance—a local renaissance of concert platform and opera stage where the music-lovers of each community can enjoy great music without distortion and omission."

"In this way," he concluded, "it will be possible for our publishers to bring out new work without their present anxiety about finance, our composers will be able to look forward to a reasonable number of performances, and our players to decent pay. In fact, we shall at last succeed in getting the musical world to function normally again."

"As You Like It" Walton's Music

THAT THE DIRECTORS of 20th Century Fox Film Corporation should have invited one of the 20th century stars of British music to write for one of its biggest productions is very creditable indeed. But the invitation seems to have exhausted their enterprise. His name, perhaps symbolically, is absent from the programme, and the opportunities he has had for writing serious film music seem negligible.

There is, of course, the Grand Introduction over the credit titles—pompous and heraldic in the traditional manner. There is a Grand Oratorio Finale with full orchestra, based on Elizabethan songs, in which a bunch of Albert Hall contralti is very prominent. Both these are written with great competence, and indeed Walton is incapable of any sort of inefficiency.

But apart from suitable *Waldweben* noises at the beginning of each sequence, which tactfully fade out as the action starts, that is the whole of Walton's contribution to *As You Like It*.

Once cannot feel that the microphone has entered very deeply into Walton's scoring soul. A large orchestra in which strings are very prominent has been used, and in the accompanying pastoral music one is conscious of the energetic ranks of the London Philharmonic sweating away behind the three-ply trees.

As far as he is allowed, Walton makes one or two musically apt suggestions. The introduction is very neatly dovetailed into the chicken-yard, and Leon Goossens on the oboe mixes very creditably with the Wyandottes. Also a neat and poetic use of the leitmotiv *Rosalind* is to be noted.

But the music for *As You Like It* is not the advance on *Escape Me Never* which we all expected.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

Britten for Capitol Films

Capitol Films have signed Benjamin Britten to write the music for their new film *Love From a Stranger*, starring Ann Harding. Britten, who is only 22, graduated into films via documentary, and is well known for his experiments in sound-orchestration. He is working in close co-operation with Rowland V. Lee, the director, and much of the music will be pre-recorded in order that certain sequences can be shot to it. Britten plans to use an unusually small orchestra for this type of film, with wood-wind and percussion predominating.

Potted Sound

The library of gramophone records at the B.B.C. contains almost every musical recording yet made, together with representative recordings of native music, from Spain and Brazil to Siam and Java. Neatly catalogued and stacked imposingly like books on shelves, these slabs of potted sound are a great standby to harassed producers of dramas, special features, and actuality programmes. The use of music plays an important part in building up the atmosphere of a programme, and many a director with agony in his heart when he arrived leaves beaming with part of Tchaikovsky's 'Pathetic,' two sides of *An American in Paris*, and a peculiar piece of noise from Algeria tucked under his arm.

For the macabre and menacing, Stravinsky and Walton are much in demand. The two Strauss' also do well, Richard for heroism and excitement, and Johann for romance, tenderness and Vienna.

When a record has been chosen it goes up to the effects department, where the section the producer needs is marked with chalk, so that it can be put on at exactly the right place and at the right moment during the production.

William Walton, still in his thirties, is generally recognised as the most important British composer since Elgar. He recently had the signal honour of a complete Promenade concert of his works. His most notable compositions are: *Facade*, *Portsmouth Point*, the *Viola Concerto*, *Belshazzar's Feast*, and his *First Symphony*. His music for Czinner's *Escape Me Never* attracted a great deal of attention.

FILM GUIDE

SHORTS

'Alt, Oo Goes There? (Dunning Colour Cartoon)
DRAWN BY: Anson Dyer. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
BRISTOL: Gaiety Oct. 1, 6 days
ST. IVES: Scala Oct. 12, 3 days
GLASGOW: Playhouse Oct. 12, 6 days
LOWESTOFT: Palace Oct. 19, 6 days
WAKEFIELD: Playhouse Oct. 26, 6 days

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves
PRODUCTION: Slatinay, George Pal. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
TOLWORTH: Odeon Sept. 28, 7 days
LONDON PALLADIUM: Shepherd's Bush Sept. 28, 7 days
LONDON: Imperial, Edgware Road Oct. 5, 3 days
BECCLES: Regal Oct. 8, 3 days
HULL: Regis Oct. 8, 3 days
BEVERLEY: Regal Oct. 15, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Picture Palace Oct. 19, 6 days
GLASGOW: Cranston's Oct. 19, 6 days
HULL: Rex Oct. 22, 3 days
BARNSLEY: Pavilion Oct. 26, 6 days
Puppets in Gasparcolor.

Bridge Builders
PRODUCTION: Oxford Group. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
ST. IVES: Scala Oct. 1, 3 days
WORCESTER: Gaumont Palace Oct. 19, 6 days
HORNCHURCH: Super Cinema Oct. 19, 6 days
COLCHESTER: Regal Oct. 19, 6 days
Dramatic propaganda.

Beside the Seaside
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
LEEDS: Pavilion Oct. 22–24
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Oct. 26–Nov. 1
CHESTER: Gaumont Palace Oct. 26–31
DARLINGTON: Alhambra Oct. 26–28

Black Diamonds
PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION: Publicity Films.
EDINBURGH: Caley Sept. 28–Oct. 3
BIRMINGHAM: Plaza Oct. 5–10
Tivoli Oct. 5–10
Odeon Oct. 5–10
GLASGOW: Grosvenor Oct. 5–10
BRISTOL: Carlton Oct. 5–10
LEICESTER: Trocadero Oct. 19–24
MANCHESTER: Astoria Oct. 26–31

Carmen (Dunning Colour Cartoon)
DRAWN BY: Anson Dyer. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
BRADFORD: Plaza Oct. 1, 3 days
BRISTOL: Gaiety Oct. 8, 3 days
CAMBRIDGE: Rendezvous Oct. 26, 6 days

Coal Face
PRODUCTION: G.P.O. SOUND DIRECTION: Cavalcanti.
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
GOUROCK: Picture House Oct. 28
ST. ANDREWS: Cinema Oct. 22
PAISLEY: Kilburne Oct. 15
NORTHFIELD: Picture House Oct. 26
BARNSLEY: Pavilion Oct. 26
PRESTWICK: Broadway Oct. 8

Dragon of Wales
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
STRATFORD: Imperial Oct. 5, 3 days
MOTHERWELL: Rex Oct. 26, 3 days
A travelogue which attempts to tackle economic conditions.

Elephant City
MANCHESTER: Forum, Wythenshawe Oct. 1, 3 days
BATLEY: Regent Oct. 1, 3 days
GLASGOW: Ritz Oct. 8, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Astoria Oct. 8, 3 days
Corona Oct. 12, 6 days
A Singhalese Documentary.

Elmer Elephant
EDINBURGH: Poole's Week Oct. 19
GLASGOW: Cinerama „ Oct. 5
Picture House Oct. 5
MANCHESTER: Tatler Oct. 5
Oxford Street Oct. 5
Market Street Oct. 5
NEWCASTLE: Stoll Oct. 12

Face of Britain Series
PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

Shipyard
BOURNEMOUTH: News Theatre Oct. 12, 3 days

This was England
BOURNEMOUTH: News Theatre Oct. 19, 3 days

Face of Britain
PORTSLADE: Rothbury Oct. 1, 3 days

Citizens of the Future
PORTSLADE: Rothbury Oct. 8, 3 days

Progress
PORTSLADE: Rothbury Oct. 15, 3 days

Great Cargoes
PORTSLADE: Rothbury Oct. 19, 3 days

Fire Fighters
DIRECTION: Peter Collin. CAMERA: W. B. Pollard.
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
KETTERING: Electric Oct. 5, 6 days
HUDDERSFIELD: Savoy Oct. 8, 3 days
BIRMINGHAM: Villa Cross Oct. 11, 7 days
Rink, Smethwick Oct. 11, 7 days
LIVERPOOL: Casino Oct. 12, 3 days
Gaumont Palace Oct. 19, 3 days
Empress Oct. 19, 3 days
Plaza Oct. 26, 6 days
LEEDS: Pavilion Oct. 19, 3 days
NOTTINGHAM: Hippodrome Oct. 19, 6 days
GRIMSBY: Savoy Oct. 26, 6 days
An exciting documentary.

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns
PRODUCTION: A. B. Svensk Filmindustri. ENGLISH PREPARATION: Donald Taylor. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
MANCHESTER: Scala Oct. 1, 3 days
NORTH SHIELDS: Princes Oct. 5, 6 days
LONDON: Monseigneur, Piccadilly Oct. 12, 6 days
Monseigneur, Strand Oct. 12, 6 days
Sphere, Tottenham Court Road Oct. 12, 6 days
Strand News Theatre, Agar Street Oct. 12, 6 days
Eros, Piccadilly Oct. 22, 3 days
CAMBRIDGE: Cosmopolitan Oct. 26, 6 days
A retrospect of European history, with shots from early newsreels.

Granton Trawler
EDITING: Edgar Anstey. CAMERA: John Grierson.
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
SCARBOROUGH: Futurist Oct. 15

Isle of Capri
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
LOWESTOFT: Palace Oct. 12, 6 days
GREAT YARMOUTH: Gem Oct. 19, 6 days
STRAND: Agar Street Oct. 26, 3 days

Key to Scotland
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
SOUTHPORT: Palladium Oct. 25–31
The history of Edinburgh.

March of Time, No. 3 (Second year)
PRODUCTION: Proprietors of TIME. DISTRIBUTION: Radio.
NEWPORT: Olympia Sept. 28, 6 days
EDINBURGH: Synod Hall Sept. 28, 6 days
DUBLIN: Capitol Oct. 2, 7 days
Grafton Oct. 4, 7 days
Grand Central Oct. 11, 7 days
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road Oct. 5, 7 days
Tussands, Baker Street Oct. 5, 7 days
Roxy, Blackheath Oct. 12, 6 days
Cinema, Euston Oct. 26, 6 days
Monseigneur, Piccadilly Oct. 26, 3 days
Monseigneur, Strand Oct. 29, 4 days
Sphere, Tottenham Court Road Oct. 29, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Tatler Oct. 5, 6 days
Commodore Oct. 26, 6 days
Royal Oct. 26, 3 days
CAMBRIDGE: Victoria Oct. 12, 6 days
EDINBURGH: Synod Hall Sept. 28, 6 days
Monseigneur Oct. 12, 3 days
Tivoli Oct. 19, 3 days
GLASGOW: Cranstons Oct. 12, 6 days
Embassy, Shawlands Oct. 12, 6 days
Lyceum, Govan Oct. 29, 3 days
Lorne, Ibrox Oct. 29, 3 days
AYR: Orient Oct. 15, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Deansgate Oct. 12, 6 days
BELFAST: Hippodrome Oct. 19, 6 days
DERBY: Odeon Oct. 19, 6 days
Coliseum Oct. 19, 6 days
LEICESTER: Palace Oct. 19, 6 days
NOTTINGHAM: Elite Oct. 19, 6 days
SHEFFIELD: Hippodrome Oct. 19, 6 days
STIRLING: Queens Oct. 19, 3 days
CARDIFF: Gaiety, Splott, Canton, Ninian, Regent, Tivoli Oct. 19, 3 days
READING: Central Oct. 26, 6 days
PEEBLES: Playhouse Oct. 29, 3 days

Mystery of Stonehenge
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
BROCKLEY: Giralda Oct. 8, 3 days

Night Mail
PRODUCTION: G.P.O. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
DUBLIN: Sandford Cinema Oct. 4
Phoenix Oct. 8
GALASHIELS: Playhouse Oct. 5
GOUROCK: Picture House Oct. 14
GRIMSBY: Lyric Oct. 15
ISLEWORTH: Odeon Oct. 24
KINGSBURY: Odeon Oct. 24
LEEDS: Easy Road Picture House Oct. 22
PRESTWICK: Plaza Oct. 22

Northward Ho!
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
GUERNSEY: Lyric Oct. 1, 3 days
WOLVERHAMPTON: Scala Oct. 5, 6 days
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road Oct. 12, 7 days
PORTSMOUTH: Royal Oct. 25, 7 days
ROCHDALE: Hippodrome Oct. 29, 3 days
FALKIRK: Pavilion Oct. 29, 3 days

Rainbow Dance
DIRECTION: Len Lye. PRODUCTION: G.P.O. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D
LONDON: Curzon Sept. 29, three weeks
Colour phantasy, with music.

Sam and His Musket (Dunning Colour Cartoon)
DRAWN BY: Anson Dyer. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
PORTSMOUTH: Troxy Oct. 4, 7 days
BELFAST: Central Oct. 15, 3 days
HAMMERSMITH: Academy Oct. 22, 3 days
AUCHTERADER: Cinema Oct. 19, 3 days

Seventh Day
DIRECTION: A. P. Barralet. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
BATLEY: Empire Oct. 8, 3 days
GUERNSEY: Lyric Oct. 12, 6 days
JERSEY: Opera House Oct. 19, 6 days
Sunday in Modern England.

Six-thirty Collection
DIRECTION: Anstey, Watt. PRODUCTION: John Grierson, G.P.O. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
SHEFFIELD: Roscoe Oct. 22

Song of Ceylon
DIRECTOR: Basil Wright. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
EPSOM: Ebbisham Hall Oct. 11
IPSWICH FILM SOCIETY Oct. 18
Documentary of Ceylon.

The World Rolls On
PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION: Publicity Films.
MANCHESTER: Rivoli Sept. 28–Oct. 3
LIVERPOOL: Palladium Oct. 19–24

Three Little Wolves
PRODUCTION: Walt Disney. DISTRIBUTION: United Artists.
HAVERSTOCK HILL: Odeon Week Oct. 5
GOLDERS GREEN: Lido Oct. 5
TOOTING: Granada Week Oct. 12
ELEPHANT & CASTLE: Trocadero Oct. 12

FILM GUIDE

SHORTS (cont.)

Under the Water (French)
DIRECTOR: Marcel de Hubsch. DISTRIBUTION: Denning
WITHINGTON: Scala Oct. 1–3
LIVERPOOL: Picture Playhouse Oct. 5–7
Documentary; unusual submarine photography of clam diving.

Vale of White Roses
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
BROCKLEY: Giralda Oct. 26, 3 days

Wagon Wheels
PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION: Publicity Films.
LIVERPOOL: Palladium, Seaforth Sept. 28–Oct. 3
West Derby Picture House Oct. 12–17
NEWCASTLE: Stoll Sept. 28–Oct. 3
Royalty Oct. 12–17
BRISTOL: Stoll Sept. 28–Oct. 3
Kingsway Oct. 5–10
Regal Oct. 19–24
GLASGOW: Grosvenor Sept. 28–Oct. 3
Commodore Oct. 19–24
MANCHESTER: Carlton Oct. 5–10
Regent Oct. 5–10
BIRMINGHAM: Olton Oct. 12–17
Scala Oct. 12–17
Warwick Oct. 12–17
Kingsway Oct. 26–31

Workers and Jobs
DIRECTION: Arthur Elton. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
SHEFFIELD: Oxford Cinema Sept. 28, 6 days
RIPON: Opera House Oct. 5, 3 days
PEEBLES: Playhouse Oct. 12, 3 days
GOLCAR: Alhambra Oct. 29, 3 days
Documentary of the Labour Exchanges

ADVERTISING FILMS

Birth of the Robot
DIRECTION: Humphrey Jennings and Len Lye. PRODUCTION: Gasparcolor, for Shell.
BRENTWOOD: Palace Oct. 5
SHEFFIELD: Scala Oct. 5
SOUTHAMPTON: Regent Oct. 5
ANDOVER: Palace Oct. 12
WELWYN: Welwyn Theatre Oct. 12
CHICHESTER: Exchange Theatre Oct. 19
COVENTRY: Scala Oct. 26

See How They Won
PRODUCTION: Revelation Films for Boots Drug Co.
LIVERPOOL: Capitol, Edge Hill Oct. 5
The Queen's Oct. 5
MANCHESTER: The Arcadia, Levenshulme Oct. 5
The Scala, Withington Oct. 8, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: The Page Hall Cinema Oct. 8, 3 days
CAMBRIDGE: The New Rendezvous Oct. 8, 3 days
LEICESTER: The Trocadero, Humberstone Oct. 12
GLASGOW: The Roxy, Maryhill Oct. 15, 3 days
BRISTOL: The Regal, Staple Hill Oct. 15, 3 days
BIRMINGHAM: The Broadway, Bristol St. Oct. 15, 3 days
EDINBURGH: The Astoria, Corstorphine Oct. 15, 3 days

FOREIGN FILMS

So Ended a Great Love (Austrian)
DIRECTOR: Karl Hartl. STARRING: Paula Wessely, Willi Forst. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
LONDON: Forum Oct. 11–17
CAMBRIDGE: Union Cinema Oct. 19–24
Historical drama—Marie Louise, Napoleon, Josephine.

The Student of Prague (Austrian)
DIRECTOR: Artur Robison. STARRING: Adolf Wohlbruck, Dorothea Wieck. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
LONDON: Forum Oct. 1–3
TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY Oct. 11
Sound version of the famous silent film.

Bonne Chance! (French)
DIRECTOR: Sacha Guitry. STARRING: Sacha Guitry, Jaqueline Delubac. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
GLASGOW FILM SOCIETY Oct. 11
ABERDEEN FILM SOCIETY Oct. 18
EDINBURGH FILM GUILD Oct. 25

Marchand d'Amour (French)
DIRECTOR: Edmond Greville. STARRING: Jean Galland, Francoise Rosay. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY Oct. 18
HAMPSTEAD: Everyman Oct. 19–Nov. 1
Satire on film industry.

Le Dernier Milliardaire (French)
DIRECTOR: René Clair. STARRING: Paul Ollivier, Raymond Cordy. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
PORTSMOUTH FILM SOCIETY Oct. 18

Unfinished Symphony (Original German Version)
DIRECTOR: Willi Forst. STARRING: Hans Jaray, Marta Eggerth. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
LONDON: Forum Oct. 4–10

Maskerade (Austrian)
DIRECTOR: Willi Forst.
OXFORD: Scala Cinema Oct. 8

Charlemagne (French)
DIRECTOR: Pierre Colombier.
OXFORD: Scala Oct. 19

Lac aux Dames (French)
DIRECTOR: Marc Allegret
OXFORD: Scala Oct. 26

FILM SOCIETIES

FILM SOCIETY OF AYRSHIRE.—4th October. *Hey Rup* (Mac Fric), *Black Magic* and Pal's *Ali Baba*. At the second meeting it is hoped to show either *M* or *Das Madchen Johanna*.

THE IPSWICH FILM SOCIETY.—18th October: *The Road to Life*, *Mor-Vran*, *Kaleidoscope*, Zuts Cartoon.

THE LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY.—24th October: *Merlusse*, *Colour on the Thames*, *Bird Sanctuary*.

It should be noted that bookings listed here are subject to changes by the exhibitors and that we are therefore unable to guarantee that this list is absolutely accurate.

FEATURE FILMS

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (Columbia)
DIRECTION: Capra. STARRING: Gary Cooper.
GENERAL RELEASE Oct. 12

Mutiny on the Bounty (M.G.M.)
DIRECTION: Lloyd. STARRING: Charles Laughton, Clark Gable, Franchot Tone.
EDINBURGH: New Victoria Oct. 5
Rutland Oct. 5
LIVERPOOL: Royal Oct. 5
Casino Oct. 5
BRISTOL: Embassy Oct. 5
CARDIFF: Empire Oct. 5
BIRMINGHAM: Palace Oct. 5
West End (fortnight) Oct. 18
SHEFFIELD: Regent Oct. 12
NEWCASTLE: Westgate Oct. 19
GLASGOW: Mecca Oct. 12

Paul Muni as Louis Pasteur in "The Story of Louis Pasteur," the Warner Bros.-Cosmopolitan Production which will be generally released on October 12.

EDUCATIONAL FILMS

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Production G.B.I. Distribution G.B.E.

DAILY WORK.
Coal
The Farm Factory Oct. 10
Shipyard

WEATHER CONDITIONS.
Water in the Air
Story of a Disturbance Oct. 17
Cathode Ray Oscillograph
Wheatlands Reel 1

COMMUNICATIONS.
The Highlands of Scotland
The Development of Railways Oct. 24
Great Cargoes
Progress

THE COUNTRY IN AUTUMN.
The Farm in Autumn
Animal Life in the Hedgerows
Life in the Highlands Oct. 31
Wheatlands Reel 2
Hoplands

Book Review:

Successful Film Writing by Seton Margrave. (Methuen.)

Most of this book is taken up by the story, treatment and script of René Clair's *The Ghost Goes West*. Mr. Margrave modestly contents himself with 34 pages in which to discuss the general principles of story-writing for the screen. In short and pithy paragraphs he gives straightforward instructions for the writer who wishes not merely to be box-office, but also up to the mark in using the capabilities of modern film technique. In its construction this section is not particularly easy to follow, but information is there, together with some amusing aphorisms.

Most people, however, will turn to the history of *The Ghost Goes West*. The original and not very inspiring *Punch* story on which it was based is followed by the first film-treatment and finally by an unexpurgated shot by shot script of the film as it was presented in the ordinary cinemas. The exact footage of each shot, in feet and frames, is given throughout. Readers should remember that this script is *not* the shooting-script, but a transcription of the cut and finished film.

There is a short introduction by Korda. And René Clair himself describes the thrills the story gave him.

—S. A. B.

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world FILM news

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AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

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For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 800 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport, Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston.
Synod Hall ...	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maidenhead.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Stratford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation ...	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork.
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth.
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz	Doncaster.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.

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CINEMA

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English Films and English People

by

J. B. Priestley

IN THE SEPTEMBER issue of *World Film News*, an editorial complained of the neglect, by English film producers, of our own working people, and unfavourably contrasted this neglect with the prominent part played by "truck drivers and clerks, cops and garage hands, shop girls and paid helps" in Hollywood films. I have been asked to comment on this, and am glad to do so, because the subject is important.

Let me say at once—and I write as a man who knows both countries pretty well—that I do not think English working class life provides as good film material as American. It is a mistake to suppose that it is simply superior technical resources that have given Hollywood its great advantage. American life has a quicker tempo than English life. It is more dramatic, just as the screaming American police car is more dramatic than its Scotland Yard equivalent. The mixture of races over there helps them considerably. So do the harsh laconic speeches, the salty slang, the whole nervous tension of American life. It is easy to make excellent film entertainment out of such material. Take two very successful Hollywood films such as *The Thin Man* and *Mr. Deeds*, remove from them what is characteristically and essentially American, try to translate them into the terms of English life, and see what you have left.

The truck drivers and clerks, cops and garage hands, and their women folk, are much more vivid and vital figures than their English equivalents. They lend themselves far more easily to good film treatment. You can get a move on with them, and film audiences, whether here or in America, like you to get a move on. I have written dialogue for both English and American films, and, even though I have to work in an alien idiom with the Americans, I have found it easier with them, just because ordinary American speech is snappier, harsher, more vivid. Then again, the backgrounds of ordinary American working life are more picturesque than the English backgrounds, which are apt to be very drab.

So much must be conceded. But this does not excuse the neglect of ordinary English life by English film producers. Because the English are harder to handle effectively in films than the Americans, this does not mean that hardly any attempt should be made to translate their life into entertaining films. (And please note that in all these remarks I have in mind films that are primarily intended for popular entertainment and to make money for their producers, and not special subsidised productions.) The very difficulty should act as a challenge. And most of us are becoming very bored with this routine of secret service agents and diamond thieves and detectives and vast country houses. It is not necessary that the story of every film should come out of the "Police News." Here I heartily agree with the recent editorial in *World Film News*.

This does not mean that I am in favour of a policy of giving us great slabs of English working class life, miles of celluloid showing us factories and engineering shops, folks sitting down to endless meat teas, and a dreary round of housework, machine-minding, football matches, and whist drives. I am willing to tackle this sort of life in a novel, because a novel, if it is worth anything at all, lights up everything from within, makes you see things from its characters' point of view. But the film—at present—has not this romantic subjective element. Therefore, it needs a bit of glamour, an increased tempo, a touch of the fantastic, people who are more vivid than the ordinary run of folk : in short, it demands a bonus somewhere.

What is really wrong with English film producers in general is that they are too timid. I said this several years ago, and nothing has happened to make me change my mind. It is true that we now have Mr. Korda, who is anything but timid and who has one of the most adventurous minds in the whole business. But Mr. Korda is a cosmopolitan producer who happens to make pictures in England. He is not an English producer, and we have no right to grumble at him because he does not make films about a life that neither he nor any of his chief associates knows intimately. Timidity is the mark of most of our producers, however, and it is their unadventurous spirit that has kept so much of our life off the screen. They are simply not enterprising. (When do they ever discover acting talent for themselves? We in the theatre do all their work for them.) A few years ago, a big English company asked me to write a film for them, and I suggested an amusing little story I had in mind that was a good-humoured satire on some aspects of the film world. "Oh no," they assured me solemnly, "we can't possibly satirise the industry." Yet within a few months of that, Hollywood came out with some crashing satires of itself. All timidity. I admit that the English are not as fond of satire as some other publics are—it is notorious that satirical plays rarely succeed on our stage—but that is no reason why they should be treated as if they were so many convalescent old ladies.

It is timidity that makes the English producers bring out a series of imitations of the milder Hollywood routines. It is timidity that makes them content to go on exploiting theatrical reputations. And it is timidity that makes them afraid of dealing as boldly with all kinds of English life as our novelists and dramatists do. For the reasons I have already given, I do not think it will be as easy for us to make successful entertaining pictures of ordinary English life as it is for the Americans to handle their ordinary life, but we can do it. Our stories will have to be better than theirs, just because our material is harder to handle. Our direction will have to be as good as their best, for the same reason. And we need plenty of good young actresses, who do not merely moon and flop about. (They ought to be combing the entire country for them, and not simply picking them up in Shaftesbury Avenue.) We do not need more character actors because we already have the best in the world. But we want, behind all this money that is going into gigantic studios now, a little enterprise, courage, enthusiasm.

The Function of a Producer

AN INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL BALCON

By Denis Myers

Whatever astrological influences guide the destinies of Mr. Michael Balcon, and I am as ignorant of the art of casting horoscopes as I am of the factors which would govern this particular instance, I am quite certain that the sign of Mercury figures in his horoscope.

For the suggestion of speed about him is amazing.

His mental agility is indeed like quicksilver. He jumps from plane to plane without effort.

He takes hold of a point, disposes of it completely, and has passed to the next, while you are still nodding agreement with his words.

While I talked to him in his office at Gaumont-British, he three times, seemingly without interrupting our conversation, dealt with secretarial queries; he answered half a dozen telephone calls, cutting himself off in the middle of his last sentences to turn and continue the even flow of his talk as if his parenthetical caller had never been.

And yet there is no suspicion of "hustle" about him.

He has discovered the secret of effortless speed.

He talks quietly (except for a curious habit of bawling into the telephone), quickly, pointedly, with the restless mannerism, so common to those of quick brains, of striding about the room as he speaks.

Known to the trade as 'Mickey'—and what better proof of the man's popularity—he has spent his life in films.

That is Michael Balcon, producer at Gaumont-British.

As such he chooses the stories, decides on the treatment, the cast and the technical personnel.

"And this," he told me, "applies not to one production only, but to every one we produce. In fact, I deal with everything except the financial side."

Even the director—as far as possible—works under Mr. Balcon, and he watches each production closely, not only before it is made, but in every stage of the making.

"That's what a producer does," he explained; "he's really in a similar position to the editor of a national newspaper. He should be able to do every job himself, while actually he selects and guides the people who do it, and has his finger on every pulse right through all the stages of the picture's creation.

"One of the troubles in the British film industry," he went on, "is the producer who is really only a financier.

"These men, who are outside the recognised companies, buy up a star and a big name director. On the names they get the finance—then there's a flop and people say 'Another bad British picture.'

"That's not producing.

"Of course the question of finance is the biggest problem in the industry here. Hollywood is continually trying to buy up our best technical staff and players. And Hollywood can outbid us, if they want to badly enough. . . .

"Mind you," Mr. Balcon dashed round the room again, "I believe in paying well for good people. I've never been a price cutter.

"Who are the coming directors? Well, Sonnie Hale for one. He's outstanding. He had the worst luck in the world in his last picture, when Jessie Matthews fell ill after he'd put in eight months' work on the film.

"Then there's Robert Stevenson. *Tudor Rose* was remarkable for a first picture. And the dialogue was, to my mind, exceptionally good, even if an American paper," he grinned, "did refer to it as 'lousy.'

"Scenario writers? Yes, we try to find the best. Stephen Gilliatt is one of our most promising youngsters. He's grown up in films.

"And don't——" Mr. Balcon shook a warning finger at me, "don't listen to those tales about scripts written by broken-down journalists and hack writers.

"We want the best—we try and get it. But a big name doesn't always mean a good story. I could tell you of world-famous names whose stuff we've turned down, because it wasn't filmic. The authors were disgruntled, but it couldn't be helped. They hadn't mastered the technique of the film story.

"So many of them would rather write for the stage . . . while the trend of things nowadays is for the film companies to buy original stories, rather than stage successes.

"It's comedy stories that are the hardest to find. And then when you do get them, so much depends on the comedian. Much more than in a dramatic theme.

"Then there's the question of overworking a star's box office appeal. Two pictures a year are enough for any comedian to do successfully."

I ran over the names of one or two stars in my head as Mr. Balcon leapt at a buzzing telephone, barked: "Yes! . . . No! . . . Rather! . . . Fine! . . . Goodbye! . . ." and, as the receiver went down, ". . . old man!"

"I suppose you notice a few changes in films as the years go by," I suggested.

Mickey Balcon laughed. "Good Lord, yes. Mind you, the changes are gradual; there's nothing dramatic or startling about what happens.

"The trend is still towards eliminating dialogue, but that doesn't mean we're reverting towards silent films. Sound is being used more and more instead of dialogue, for dramatic effect."

"A René Clair tendency," I murmured.

Mr. Balcon smiled. "Call it that, if you like. I'd rather say a Hitchcock one. As a matter of fact the sound track scenario of Hitchcock's new film is almost the most dramatic part of the picture. There are long sequences with no dialogue at all, but all sorts of sound effects.

"Hitchcock, of course, is exceptional as a director. Give him an idea—that's all he wants—and he'll develop his picture in his own way, regardless of the original script."

"Hence," I said, "all these outcries about stories being unrecognisable when they're filmed?"

Mr. Balcon circled the room for the seventeenth time.

"Does it matter," he asked, "so long as the result is a good picture? Of course it doesn't—unless you're dealing with the classics, or with characters who are so well known that the public resents any interference with their pre-conceived ideas of the story. And even then . . .

"Look at *The Thirty-nine Steps*. John Buchan himself said it was an improvement on the original."

"But that's a modern story," I objected. "Take the classics, take Shakespeare . . ."

Mr. Balcon shook his head. "As a matter of personal opinion," he said, "and it is a personal one, I'm not a great believer in 'period' films. There's something about the photographic treatment that jars. And then, you must remember that Shakespeare's plays, for example, were written for days when the whole atmosphere of the theatre, and the way parts were played, were different.

"But *Romeo and Juliet* was a magnificent production. So, of course, was Korda's *Henry VIII*."

"And what are the next changes the producing world is going to spring upon the public?" I asked.

"Nothing revolutionary. As I told you, it's gradual."

"Colour? Stereoscopy?"

Mr. Balcon's eyes gleamed. "Stereoscopic effects would be a big thing," he admitted. Colour he seemed less interested in.

"Of course these improvements will come in time," he said. "But when they come, everyone will have them. No one firm will jump in ahead of another. We're not worrying over them."

"Talking of things to come," I said, "H. G. Wells said the other night that he had not succeeded yet in making the talkies say something."

Mr. Balcon laughed. "We won't admit that at G.B." he said, "I think we're saying quite a lot."

"On both sides of the Atlantic," I stated, rather than asked.

Mr. Balcon nodded. But he had two telephones, one in each hand, and his secretary was holding open the door.

His nod may have been for telephone No. 1, or for telephone No. 2, or for the secretary, or, of course, it may have been for me.

"Goodbye," he smiled to all four of us.

EDITORIAL

Three Points for Maxwell

MR. HILAIRE BELLOC remarked recently that all our modern large-scale instruments tend necessarily to exclude competition, and fall under the rule of great units of capital. "If you have not State monopoly, you have the service of wealth." The Association of Gaumont-British and Associated British appears to be a case in point. This places at the disposal of a single influence a group of six hundred and thirty-three theatres. It commands access to four or five million people a week. It brings under a single authority the production facilities of two studios. It controls the production policy of about 40 films a year and dictates the choice of more than one hundred more. It owns two 16 mm. projector systems and two sound systems. It commands two newsreels, two news magazines and has the power of life and death over the struggling educational units at G.B.I. Where so much power is, one may reasonably expect a sense of responsibility.

Here are three points of reform on which Mr. Maxwell may care to exercise his increased influence.

The British film, in spite of successes, has not yet acquired the skill or wit of the American, and, as Mr. Priestley points out in this issue, the British character has not yet been written into it. An imaginative policy would see that our national resources are really tapped.

Our present efforts to turn the film to educational and social uses are piecemeal and scrappy. The rising demand might easily be organised and an instrument of enormous civic power created.

There is as yet no systematic apprentice scheme for the industry nor any trial-ground for the experimental. At a very small cost indeed the present wastage of men and ideas could be turned into a national asset....

Mr. Maxwell, the Controller-elect, is a native of Scotland, breeding-ground of the purposive or teleological branches of philosophy. He goes to the head of an industry, the anarchies of which he himself has blazingly described before the Moyne Committee. If it is to be organised it can only be organised in terms of purposes. Mr. Maxwell has an opportunity of writing his name high in the social history of our generation—but will he?

The Other Institute

THE THIRD ANNUAL report of the Film Institute draws attention to its achievements for the year. There is record of a catalogue compiled and of a further accumulation of films in the Institute's Film Library. An information service has been given on the everyday problems of the schools. These are valuable and necessary services and we do not seek to disparage them. We do, however, note, and with reason, that thirty-one pages of an annual report is putting the service high. The report does not fail in showmanship. Five of its pages are devoted to the names of an Advisory Council, the chief distinction of which is that it is so seldom asked to advise.

We note this more in sorrow than in anger: in sorrow, because down in South Kensington is another Institute. It blows no trumpets. It has not had the window-dressing skill to pile up five pages of important names. It has merely pioneered the educational field for eight years and worked quietly and solidly while the others talked. It has built up probably the largest collection of films in the country and has serviced them faithfully at the rate of twenty thousand a year. It has kept alive the story of Britain's Empire in the classrooms of the country and millions of children are its beneficiaries.

We crave attention for the Imperial Institute, for it receives no grant from the Privy Council. As against the £7,000 grant to the Film Institute it scrambles along on some fifteen hundred pounds a year. Too proud and too forthright to beg, not showman enough for an annual report with five pages of important names, heaven knows how it manages. The Privy Council might ask Sir Harry Lindsay about this other Institute at South Kensington. Better still, it might ask those thousands of teachers for whom the Imperial Institute has made the educational film a living reality.

The Royal House has always made the Imperial Institute a matter of personal interest. Its patronage suggests a more solid support than is now being given.

Valuable Research

THIS MONTH we publish an account of the financial structure of the American cinema. It is the first time that any film journal has published so exhaustive analysis. In a later number we shall give a similar account of the British scene. The two pictures should make together a valuable contribution to the public understanding of the governing forces behind the movies.

As in the case of our analysis of the British censorship, the research work has been done by the Film Council. It is the special privilege of *World Film News* to encourage such work. In the film world we live from adverb to adjective. No news is so local, no values are so ephemeral and no structures crumble so quickly as those of Wardour Street. Carried away with the latest success and deafened by the last strident ballyhoo on picture or star, we have no time to understand the workings of our own trade. And the public knows even less. When the Maxwell merger comes along, the romantic young men of the movie columns are content with headlines on Napoleon and make no mention of the influences in the City which dictated the decision. And they could not, because they do not know. In an industry where so many guys are 'wise' and so few are sensible one looks for a closer attention to the realities.

If, as we believe, this sort of analysis is welcomed by all who have the interests of the cinema at heart, we hope that they will back the Film Council in further investigations.

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Exactly Like Shakespeare

MR. SHAW tells us that he writes "exactly like Shakespeare." Not exactly. G.B.S. is a master of charade and a prince of journalists. But among his many braveries he has never included the bravery of poetry. For the spacious panoply of things which is the substance of poetry, he substitutes the drier and less dangerous panoply of notions. When the sparks of the poet fly upwards he retires, like the great old Puritan he is, to the safety of sense. One remembers his eyebrows, not his eyes.

All this, we argue, makes G.B.S. a jealous judge of the cinema. When he criticises the camera man and deplores his concentration on the spotlights over the doorway, it may be that he envies our power of sight. When he curses our excursions to Monte Carlo and tells us to forget the art of diorama, he may be denying not only the quick changes of the showman but the sea changes of the poet. When he tells us that with the talkie we must accept the conditions of the drama, he may be dooming us to the somewhat derelict conversationalism of his own drama.

The camera moves and itches to move. Things matter to the cinema and, in the tempo it commands and the sensations it too often exploits, it is the master of physical observation. The window on the world which the diorama was and the cinema is, is the open sesame to heaven and earth and the images thereof.

We may not yet have turned our eyes to great images, but the examples of Pudovkin and others show how noble a wanderer the camera might be. Mr. Shaw tells us to leave the west wind—for the strumpet it is—to the interest film, and concentrate on the discussions between the hearthrug and the sofa. Our answer is with the camera and with Pudovkin. The eye of Shakespeare added the images of the world without to the drama in hand—and who are we to do less?

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW ON—

The Art of Talking for the Talkies

Every stage producer, film director, actor or actress—and would-be actor or actress—will find these Shavian pronouncements of unusual interest and value. On October 23rd, Mr. Shaw introduced a lecture on "The Faults and Merits of Diction as Heard from the Screen" by Dr. Esdaile at the M.G.M. private theatre. The Esdaile lecture turned into a more important examination by G.B.S. himself of many practical problems of cinema technique. World Film News presents its own verbatim account so that its readers may share the privilege of the occasion.

HOW TO SPEAK SHAKESPEARE

HOW TO ACHIEVE CLIMAX

MICROPHONE VALUES

NORMA SHEARER'S VOICE

DANGER OF PHOTOGRAPHY

CASTING VOICES FOR CONTRAST

FALLACIES OF NATURAL SPEECH

"JUST EXACTLY as the change on to the movie screen involved a completely new technique of acting, so that you found the most experienced actors were the most impossible when you wanted to get them on the screen, so the change to the talkie involves a quite new technique. Because of the speech distance in the ordinary theatre the actor has to exaggerate a good deal, both in gesture and in delivery, in order to get to the boy at the back of the gallery. In the intensely illuminated, magnifying film, if they attempted to do with their voices and their gestures what was done in the ordinary theatre, the effect was ridiculous, it was so exaggerated. You had to get a technique of diminution instead of exaggeration. The first lesson you had to learn in the movies was never to move.

"Well, that lesson was learned at last, and then the talkie came along. Precisely the same thing, the same change in technique, came with the talkie. Instead of having to make your voice audible at a great distance; instead of having to remember that certain delicate nuances which you use in conversation were no use in a theatre because they did not get across, you suddenly found yourself speaking into an extraordinarily sensitive instrument, and this instrument magnified your voice and carried it almost anywhere. So again, just as you had to abandon your old exaggerated technique of acting and come back to the opposite of exaggeration, diminished action, so in the same way it had become necessary to speak, to articulate very distinctly for the microphone as you do for the gramophone. You had also to master the rather difficult fact that the microphone, like the gramophone, picks up and makes audible a number of tones and peculiarities in the voice which we do not hear if we are listening to the person speaking. The microphone for instance brings out native accents with the most extraordinary vigour, although you may not notice them in ordinary speech.

"Some of the Americans have performed extraordinary feats in training American actresses to speak in the English way. I heard only the other day Miss Norma Shearer. I saw her in a film, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, and it was perfectly beautiful to hear the way she spoke English. She almost brought tears to my eyes by the beautiful way in which she pronounced the word 'water.' I knew perfectly well that her natural way of saying it was 'watter,' but she had learned to say it as we do, and that meant she must have taken a great deal of trouble in order to speak in the English way.

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"But there is more to be done than that. Too often in the talkies we have a cast made up of people who all speak very much at the same pitch and in the same way. If you want to get a really effective performance you ought to be very careful to make your voices vary. When I cast a play I not only bear in mind that I want to have such-and-such a person for one part and such-and-such a personality for another part, but I want to have a soprano, an alto, a tenor and a bass. A conversation on the stage in which they all speak with the same trick and at the same speed is an extremely disagreeable thing and finally very tiring. You have to select your voices so that they will contrast and you have to bear in mind that your microphone will bring a number of little nuances and changes which, as I say, would be quite impossible on the stage.

"We have not thought enough about these things. In spite of the popularity of the film, nobody to whom you talk ever talks about the voices or about wanting better voices, or understands anything about phonetics. Yet the neglect of those things does really make a difference in the money that you get by them. If a film bores people by being a noisy film, a worrying film, people don't know what is wrong but that doesn't alter the fact that they are worried, and come away saying they have not enjoyed it. They can't put their finger on what is the matter.

"Now you gentlemen, it is your business to become very critical of films and critical from this point of view. The contrast of voices will make a film very pleasant. As a playwright it concerns me very much. I have always known the difference that it makes to me to get my performances vocally right. And yet I am quite sure it is neglected in the talkies."

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Questions and discussion followed the lecture.

Q. (Mr. Sydney Carroll). "*Is it possible to do justice to Shakespeare's verse as verse through the medium of the screen?*"

G.B.S. "I should go so far as to say that you can do things with the microphone that you cannot do on the ordinary stage. I want again to emphasise the fact that you are dealing with a new instrument and that in speaking on the screen you can employ nuances and delicacies of expression which would be no use spoken by an actor on the ordinary stage in the ordinary way. They might possibly reach the first row of the stalls; they would not get any further.

"In all other respects you have to remember, and adapt yourself accordingly, that the microphone is really enabling everybody in the house to hear you quite well and if you have an adequate recording instrument, if your machinery is all right and up-to-date (which in many picture houses it is not), you must not do it as you do it in Regent's Park.

"The main thing that you require nowadays is to get people who understand what they are saying when they are speaking Shakespeare. That is really the difficulty, because you must remember that Shakespeare's language is to a great extent a dead language. When I was young we were all brought up on the Bible and that enabled us to understand Elizabethan English. But people are no longer all brought up in that way nowadays, and when you are going to a theatre, listening to people speaking Shakespeare, try to experiment, as I try so often at rehearsals: shut your eyes. As long as you can see the actor and see his eagle eye fixing the other actor, you don't really listen very clearly and try to understand exactly what is said. But try it with your eyes shut, and especially if he is speaking to some other actor who does understand what he says. The difference comes out at once.

"The late Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree never understood anything in Shakespeare except what nobody could possibly help. It was like the schoolboy going through the Latin Play or the Greek play. You could always hear the difference if you were on the watch for it.

"And I may say that I think the difficulty of avoiding monotony is largely a question of people understanding what they are saying.

"You see if people do understand and feel what they are saying they get all sorts of inflexions without thinking about it. Of course if they are only repeating lines they have picked up, not only is the thing monotonous, but it is unintelligible, because they never fix the key-word and get it across. You always have to look out for the one word without which the speech is unintelligible."

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Q. "*With the use of the camera you are able to get the spirit of the aside, the soliloquy, much better than you are able to get it on the stage . . . ?*"

G.B.S. "That is very interesting. Because one of the difficulties now is to keep the camera in its place. Often in a studio I have seen an enthusiastic photographer wasting any amount of money and time in order to get a certain little spot of light over the door, which did not matter in the slightest degree, and at the same time a number of actors were having to repeat themselves over and over again until they became lunatics almost. But there it is. It is a very admirable illustration of what can be done. Really the whole business of the screen is a most wonderful art. Nobody I think has yet had the least idea of how much can be done with it. In fact we are at present in the stage when anybody who really knows what can be done with it gets cast out of the studio because he knows nothing about it!"

Q. "*Don't all these devices in themselves constitute an interruption of the verse, the rhythm, the sweep of the verse?*"

G.B.S. "Well, if they are not used in the proper way, of course they not only spoil the verse but they spoil everything else. It is extraordinary how much can be spoiled if you let the photographer, as photographer pure and simple, get the upper hand. There is the human voice; you have the verse and the lines. They may be deliberately distorted for some reason, but you have to be careful. You have to remember for instance that you are speaking Shakespeare, not giving an exhibition of photography."

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"*I think the point really is that if someone was in charge of the elocution in the studio, he would eliminate these errors and would help to strengthen the actors in the performance of their work.*"

G.B.S. "If you get in an elocutionist you have to be rather careful that he is not too elocutionary. We still unfortunately have remnants left of that terrible old 19th century notion that the whole art of the elocutionist in speaking verse was to conceal the fact that he was speaking verse and run the lines together in such a way that nobody would suspect it was verse. The consequence is that a great deal of it sounds absurd.

"If your elocutionist is not up to date and if he is not a fairly all round man, you may have to be just as careful of the elocutionist as of the photographer. It is a great pity of course that the audience cannot throw dead cats, gingerbeer bottles, etc., at the performers. They cannot express their disapproval."

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"*One of the things I think one regrets very frequently is that with so many people the range of voice is limited.*"

G.B.S. "Of course you must bear in mind that, as a matter of fact, the human voice is very limited and the most terrible things occur sometimes in Shakespeare nowadays. You will find an actor for instance, trying to make a climax. Perhaps he gets as far as one, and the next climax he tries to make on top of that, and then the next. The result is, of course, when you come to such a thing as the last act of *Macbeth*, that before he is half way through he is a shrieking lunatic. There you can use the skill of the actor. The actor has always to remember what are the limits. They used to understand this much better. An eminent German actor who was here some time ago was very instructive on that matter. Instead of trying to shout up and up, whenever he made a big effect on the stage he generally went up the stage to do it. He got his tremendous effect, and then, immediately, he dropped his arms and came slowly down the stage, leaving the audience to realise the effect. He usually sat down on the chair, and then he began pianissimo. That was the trick. With the actor in such stuff as, say, the big scenes of Shakespeare it is not a matter of voice altogether. He must be continually looking out for the moment when he can get down to nothing in order that he may have some room to get up again. It is part of the trick of Shakespearean acting, that you give the illusion that you are a sort of human volcano, going from one summit to another. These special tricks have got to be learnt for the screen as well as for the theatre."

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"*I don't know why this discussion has become so strongly Shakespearean. The bulk of the speech which we are likely to hear on the screen for many years is going to be of the ordinary people of to-day. I am all for improving speech; but the speech director must beware of destroying personal characteristics.*"

G.B.S. "There again we must remember that what you call 'natural' speech is no use at all either on the stage or the screen. It is generally quite unintelligible, and one of the things you have to explain when dealing with students. Suppose you have a play with Cockney dialect. They all take a great deal of trouble to imitate Cockney as they hear it, and the result is completely unintelligible. You have to take your Cockney and find out exactly what the sounds are and articulate them in the same artificial way as you would Shakespearean English.

"Occasionally you want to reproduce these dialects on the stage, but all the same the people speaking these dialects have to articulate in a way which is perfectly artificial. Then it comes out all right.

"One thing I have to warn you about. In good drama I don't think we are going to lose altogether what we call the Shakespearean effect. If anybody imagines that the dialogue in my plays is natural, they are making a fearful mistake. I write exactly like Shakespeare and I find if only people will get the rhythm and melody of my speeches, I do not trouble myself as to whether they understand them, so to speak; once they get the rise and fall of them they are all right."

* * * * * *

"*The main function of the screen is to relate the stories in terms of moving imoges. Strictly speaking, speech should be secondary, whereas on the stage speech is primary. Otherwise the film may tend to become a photographic replica of a stage play. The screen should tend to sever its connection with the stage.*"

G.B.S. "I know the tendency in the movies. I once tried to experiment with a little film myself and I was told the thing was quite impossible because the scene remained the same from the beginning to end. They told me that unless at every second speech all the characters went, say, to Monte Carlo or some picturesque locality of that sort, it was not fit for the screen. I said, 'No, I am going to try this experiment. It will be in a single room; and there will be all the movements from the sideboard to the hearthrug, and the hearthrug to the door, and so on. And that is all we can have.' Now that you have got the talkie and can have real drama you must not cling to the old dissolving views, the old diorama. You must get rid of it.

"It is all very well to say, 'Now we have got the talk and we are losing the movement.' That is not the purpose or point of the drama. When you get the talkie you are in for drama and you must make up your mind to it. You might always have in the same bill—I quite agree you ought to have—your gulls and cliffs and all that. I am very fond of them myself. But you must not mix up the two things. If you want to do a drama, then it must hold the audience as drama. If you say 'We must go over to Monte Carlo every few minutes,' you have neither decent drama nor decent talkies."

Arthur Dent—to W.F.N.

I do not agree that the background of *Mr. Deeds* is a new trend. Shakespeare used it in a different guise in *King Lear* and other plays but I am not sure of the significance of your observations regarding the beatitudes. I am reminded that one of them is "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Do you mean that to have an application to film magnates and film stars?

Strange as it may seem, you ought to know that some producers reflect as much on the pictures they are producing as a butcher reflects on the carcase he is slicing. His pre-eminent concern is whether the picture will make a profit for him or not.

THE AMERICAN SHOUT AND THE QUIET VOICE

By FRANCIS MEYNELL,
G.B.'s celebrated publicity expert

(By arrangement with "Typography," the new quarterly published by the Shenval Press)

THE DESIGN OF the new postage stamps has produced from the Academicians some moving expressions of regret at its lack of Art. The only Art in these stamps, they have said, is in the Shading.

That bit about Shading may have surprised some people; but not me. When I was eight years old I was given instruction in Art at the academy of the Misses Lamprell at Hove. Here I had my choice of two acknowledged Art forms. One was Drawing, the other Shading. I chose Shading.

Speaking, then, as an Artist I want to make a comparison between this stamp-business and cinema advertising. The old stamps were unspeakably silly in their repetitions (they told you three several times what their denomination was), in their ornateness ("spinach" is the favourite description of such things in America) and in their irrelevancies (dolphins and whatnot). But their execution was, I think, brilliant; and Barnett Freedman did a fine job of work within the narrow limits allowed him in tidying up the mess at the time of the Jubilee issues. (You must remember that the late King would not allow major changes. He thought they would be unlucky.)

Film advertising also is full of redundancies, vanities, repetitions and superstitions. The postage stamp said 1½*d.* three times over; movie ads. use as many repetitions to indicate that the picture is "super," "colossal," and (a word of self-praise I noticed with pleasure in a recent large announcement) "pretentious." The vanities are responsible for the inclusion of names of technicians in whom the public has no interest, and for what might be called hierarchical type-display. Habit (the earliest form of superstition) governs the choice of certain days, certain spaces, certain newspapers for film advertising. But like the old stamps, film advertising is often ingenious and sometimes even clever in the details of its execution. The whole technique of modern process work is invoked: the newest types mixed with hand-lettering; combination half-tone and line; reverse zincos and Ben Day tints; "canvas" and vertical half-tone screens . . . But as with the old stamps, there is no simple statement, no coherence, no DESIGN. In short, the major faults of both are far too much "art" work and too much Shading. As Noel Carrington once put it, "Despite all the newest tricks of the Trade, cinema advertising looks Victorian."

Now if you set out to try to better either the postage stamp or the poster vamp, there is one master requirement. When you have had your fancy, the stamp must still look like a stamp; the poster should still look like a cinema poster. The public interested in sending a letter or going to a cinema want first of all a stamp signal or a cinema signal in which they can trust.

Mr. Dwiggins, the distinguished American designer, put out a whole book of propaganda against the design of paper currency, postage stamps, and such-like in this country; and added a series of his own suggestions for these official printed forms. They were fine: well-composed, cleanly executed, "spinachless." But they didn't look, to my eye, like money or stamps. They looked like fine labels for a beauty preparation. They had lost the special significance of stamp and dollar-bill "style."

Or think of it (with Paul Beaujon, who is often worth thinking with) in this way: the advertiser's task, he says, is like the music-printer's: that of making it as easy as possible to "sight-read" what is on the page. To perform this task one must provide enough novelty to catch the eye, enough conventionality to fulfil the expectation: and then add what you will of charm or dynamite to the whole boiling.

What are our special difficulties?

Display advertising of films in newspapers is confined to their first West End runs. The three London evening papers and three Sunday papers make up the list of customary media. The total amount spent may come to something like £300,000 a year. If that were spent in one campaign, or even in half a dozen, the problem of presentation would be simple, though others would remain. But this expenditure has to cover something like 250 pictures—each one a separate selling problem, demanding a special treatment typographically, verbally and pictorially; all in competition with the others; nearly all limited hopelessly in the matter of space. Since I have been in the industry I have had to assume responsibility for a new campaign on an average every ten days . . . a campaign of the kind, because of its complexity and its smallness of appropriation, which would be the despair of any advertising agency.

And it isn't only the quantity of these "accounts"; it is their peculiarity. Every picture comes laden with contractual obligations—with a schedule of the proportionate type sizes in which the names of stars and starlings, the producer, director, authors, *et al.* have to appear. We may have to reconcile the advertising crotchets of the Producer, the Distributing Company and the Theatre, all three. We will certainly have to work at break-neck speed. And we will have to prepare advertisements which will be printed either in good positions in badly printed papers (the evenings) or amidst an outrageous medley of displays in better printed papers (the Sundays). We can't use large spaces. So that real ingenuity is needed to find a fit (i.e. noticeable and persuasive) style of illustration and display. Remember, too, that despite the fine work of producers like Michael Balcon and Alexander Korda, most (by number) "big" pictures are still American, and every American picture arrives in England with its advertising campaign already prepared. Prepared, not for a continued run in the West End of London, but for three-days stands in the tank towns of America. Naturally they are misfits for London opening runs. But few Managing Directors of English companies distributing American pictures (Murray Silverstone of United Artists is a sterling exception) have the wisdom and the courage to permit an alteration of what the far-distant producer has approved for quite other markets and minds.

Now these American shouters—the vicious voices—set the tone for everyone else. I have seen a brave English producer agree to the policy of the quiet voice, the explanatory professional voice, in his advertising; and then reel back defeated from his next encounter with the Gill extra bold display of a rival's super-super marvel. The loudest type goes, of course, with the loudest words. At present a little extra visibility, a little extra audibility, and, most important, a lot of extra credibility is to be had by modulated words and modest displays. The day of train-wrecks as the staple for films has gone by; but even intellectual, even intelligent pictures are still for the most part advertised in the train-wreck tradition.

That is assuredly one reason why there is still a large public which refrains from the Cinema. If we could consider all our advertisements as in part an embassage to the public from the film industry, if we would make them always honest in statement and decorous in expression, we should not merely sell our pictures better but we should do something far more effective: we should promote a habit and an expectation of enjoyment. Individual pictures are nearly always oversold; what is undersold is "going to the pictures."

I find that all I have written is an explanation of our difficulties, an apology for our shortcomings. But here (at Gaumont-British) and there (at United Artists) a policy of simplification of design, of moderate statement and of informativeness is in effect. I do not believe that the public, the West End theatre-going public, has so far lost its old vocabulary that the words "good" or "pleasant" or "pretty" mean nothing to ears burning with such phrases as "the greatest and grandest spectacle of this or any other year."

It is not unreasonable to believe that the selling points of a picture can best be brought into the currency of talk by using in film advertising the voice, the words and the manners of people who are neither morons nor gangsters.

MONTHLY COMPETITION

Report on Competition No. 3

Stung by the success of Scotland last month, Londoners and provincials alike rushed into battle. But the insolent Scot wins again hands down, with a Londoner second.

First prize: Miss C. J. Shepherd (Edinburgh).

Second prize: Tristram Stack (London). His suggestion, 'Andy Barr and the Reindeer' nearly got him first prize.

Miss Shepherd's entry was so interesting that we print excerpts from it below.

DRAMATISED DOCUMENTARY

(1) Art and the State

Outline: The tremendous opportunities that the State has as a patron of art—from public buildings to postage stamps. In the past intelligent co-operation between the State and the artist was arrived at, e.g., Early Christian (Byzantine) Art; Renaissance Art; Baroque; George IV and old Regent Street, etc. Trace the decline of the State in the encouragement of art in the 19th century, e.g., the growth of museums and with them the idea that the place of art is in the museum; lamp posts imitating Benvenuto Cellini. What is happening to-day? Continuation of 19th century tradition, especially by municipalities. The realisation that the State can encourage art again, e.g., B.B.C., Underground posters, etc. This might become the starting ground for a wider State patronage.

DRAMATISED DOCUMENTARY

(2) The Scottish Universities face modern conditions.

Outline: The place of the University man in modern life. University men (and women) in business, as teachers, lawyers, clergymen, doctors, etc.

Show how the Scottish universities were born in the 15th and 16th centuries and ask how these institutions are facing modern conditions.

Indicate what is needed. For Art to preserve its traditions but bring its teaching up-to-date; for Medicine to modify its tradition and bring its teaching up-to-date; for Science to alter completely its tradition and to keep its teaching up-to-date.

EPIC: **The British Empire—and the Race Relations in it.**

Outline: Begin by showing the commercialism which began "territory collecting." Out of a need for trade grew a symbolism which labelled itself Imperialism. The growing discontent in India and the fermenting discontent in Kenya. What will happen? Will it be solved as it is being solved in the West Indies by black and white co-operating under an Imperialist system? Or will it eventually mean the disintegration of the Empire and the end of Imperialism?

COMPETITION NO. 4

A prize of one guinea and a second prize of 10s. 6d. is offered for the most practical proposal to improve the subject matter of the commercial film, without detracting from box-office receipts. Entries should be sent in by November 20th, and should not exceed 250 words.

RULES AND CONDITIONS

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the competition in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to **Competitions, World Film News, Oxford House, Oxford Street, W.1.** Solutions must arrive by the first post on Friday, November 20th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym.

3. The Editors' decision is final. They reserve the right to print the whole or part of any entry sent in. MSS. cannot be returned. If no entries reach the required standard, no prize will be given.

WHEN CHILDREN JEER

Two teachers describe the zest for fighting films, the lavatory parades at the 'goody-goodies' and all the likes and dislikes of the infant film fan

TEACHERS ARE BECOMING film conscious, using films in and out of school; they are buying cameras, attending film schools and classes in their spare time, making records of school events and co-operating with film producers in the all-important job of selecting and adapting available material and making commentaries for new educational films.

Concurrent with this activity a zeal for testing the reactions of the children has become epidemic, especially among those very remote from the actualities of regular classroom practice, and, worst of all, some even out of touch altogether with children. The two questions constantly asked are: "What is the value of the educational film?" and "What films do children like or dislike and which are harmful to them?" The answer to both is really, "No one quite knows."

It is inevitable that the value of the teaching film should be tested by means of fearful questionnaires, and more or less revealed by children's essays and answers to oral or written questions.

The one way to get an approximation to the truth is for "young-at-heart" grown-ups to sit *unobserved* among the children and listen to their remarks over a long period at a large variety of children's shows. Views can be based on the hearty laughter, terrific applause and cheers, and breathless silence of genuine and unmistakable liking balanced by the noise, shuffling, "lavatory parading" and even open jeering of whole-hearted dislike.

Experience like this tends to show what children like. They seem to like fighting of all kinds; western and other vigorous open air films; comedies, especially with child actors such as Our Gang; young animals and people in real life or make-believe; stories they have read; newsreels and cartoons with not too much "wise-cracking" or too subtle jokes; colour films. Charlie Chaplin is still King of the Comics. Right *must* triumph over wrong and there has to be a happy ending.

They appear to dislike goody-goody films; sloppy sentimental and sex appeal films are openly derided. They won't stand for cruelty or bestiality, unfair play or sneakishness. Drunkenness is no joke. Scenery, however beautiful, unless accompanied by human activity, leaves them cold. They get quite annoyed with poor quality of technique, scenery or acting.

As far as I can judge, the following types are likely to do real harm to children, especially by their cumulative effect; and damage to mind, nerves or morals may ensue:—

Horrific films (and a close-up in a nature film may be horrific!). Over excitement and long drawn out agony. Glorification or condonation of evil doing.

Sex films, while silly to young average children, may be harmful to special children and to nearly all adolescents. Overdoses of "goodness" sicken healthy minded children.

I have worked at children's film shows since 1924. This year at Battersea, two of the best received films were *Man of Aran* and *Industrial Britain*, and that in a series including Chaplin, Tom Mix, Buck Jones, Laurel and Hardy, Jessie Matthews and Disney.

D. K.-J.

THE NUMBER OF FILMS a child sees under the auspices of the school is a very small proportion of the total number of films he sees: the ordinary commercial programme supplies our children with nearly all their film fare. Prepared films and programmes matter little to us beside the miscellany provided by the commercial cinema for young and old.

The children see the stuff we see ourselves. They see it in much the same light, and react to it in much the same way. Most films are carefully made in such a way that they will appeal to as wide an audience as possible, and this process entails a simplification of motives and issues, a clarification of plot and structure, a general talking-down, which has led critics to observe that most films seem to be made for children.

Children like fighting of all kinds. Hollywood has given us hundreds of fighting pictures—gangster, boxing, war, navy, submarine, aeroplane, G-men, and so on.

Right must triumph in the end. Hollywood says right shall triumph, and triumph it does.

Children like to see stories they have read. Hollywood gives us *Treasure Island*, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *Little Women*, and others.

Children like comedies. Hollywood includes a good proportion of comedies in its output.

Children like child actors. Hollywood gives them child actors—Jackie Coogan, Jackie Cooper, Jackie Searle, Jane Withers, Micky Rooney, Shirley Temple.

So with Western, adventure, horse racing, and engineering films. Hollywood knows better than any of its critics what children like.

The commercial companies all along worked on the principle that the tastes of adults are the same as the tastes of children. I see no reason to fear that the supply of commercial films suitable for children will at any time dry up.

Now let us consider the rest of the film output, which consists mainly of films dealing with love relationships and musicals.

I should say that most of these films, while they may bore children, are harmless enough to them. They are carefully adapted to the morality of the multitude, and fortunately public morality is assessed fairly high.

Further we must remember that people will not go in a body to look at things they might pore over in private. The cinema being a public entertainment is quite safe from the franker sorts of pornography and obscenity and pretty safe from the subtler sorts.

"Sex films, while silly to young average children, may be harmful to special children, and to nearly all adolescents." I am inclined to take a more optimistic view of this matter. Love scenes on the screen are so high-falutin that nobody takes them for other than they are—*i.e.*, wildly impossible, make-believe or wish-fulfilment dreams. To this class belong the heavy, passionate, devotional, glamorous efforts of the Marlene-Greta type. The lighter sex films, the gay girl-shows and musicals, appear to me equally innocuous. I fail to see what harm they can do to the adolescent.

J. R. B. F.

Windbag the Sailor on Film Technique

WILL HAY

THE SANDS OF THE DESERT were growing gold for Gainsborough Pictures as I wandered into their workmanlike, if not palatial, offices amidst the slums of Hoxton, and on to the set of *Windbag the Sailor*.

"Now where," asked my guide, "is Mr. Will Hay?"

A couple of goats wagged their heads negatively as they nibbled sentimentally at the reportorial trousers. A gaily coloured macaw (or it may have been a parrot) made a noise that was reminiscent of the more uncouth of cinema audiences. A dusky beauty of more avoirdupois than elegance waved towards the desert island hut wherein Mr. Hay could be heard chuckling.

Director William Beaudine looked suspiciously at me from under his eyeshade.

Then Mr. Hay, a cross between a W. W. Jacobs skipper and Popeye, emerged from his hut balancing a cup of tea with scientific care, and we left the open spaces of the desert for the less congested 10 by 8 of someone's office.

It is, perhaps, one of nature's compensations that comedians are as sober-minded away from their audiences in proportion as they are scintillatingly funny in their working hours.

Mr. Hay is no exception. Not that he is a dull fellow. But he takes life seriously rather than with a chuckle; his hobbies are by no means subjects for levity. He is, of course, as most people know, an astronomer of note (he was made a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society for discovering some new spots on Saturn), and although you may know him as the eccentric schoolmaster of the music halls, he is a serious scientist, an ace glider, and holds an air pilot's licence.

Otherwise, he is just the nice, pleasant quiet sort of chap you might meet at the 'local' round the corner.

But I made one discovery. Here is a star who has a good word to say for British films, who even compares them to American films to the latter's disadvantage.

"Oh, yes," he said, "I agree that the tempo is often very slow, but isn't that better than two hours of hysterical high-speed hustle which leaves you breathless?

"To my idea—and of course you must remember I'm only a beginner, I've only had two and a half years in pictures—the secret of success is in variation.

"Think of it musically"—he waved his pipe in the air—"you don't want 6-8 tempo all the way through a film any more than you want waltz time. You want a bit o' both—light and shade in action, as well as in camera work."

I asked Mr. Hay if he found any difference between working for films and for his music-hall audiences.

He nodded. "On the music hall stage you have to broaden everything, exaggerate it," he said. "For the films it's just the reverse.

"You see, your theatre or music-hall audience expects something theatrical, whereas your film audience must be given the illusion of reality.

"Even if your situations and characters are far-fetched, the whole idea of the film is to give that semblance of reality which the music-hall needn't —mustn't have.

"Take my schoolmaster sketch—I tried to give the idea of the old man who is really past his job, but essentially it was a caricature, a burlesque, and you couldn't translate it literally to the screen.

"Besides, the humour of the screen's a different art. You've got to remember that you're acting for a universal audience, not just a particular town or district.

"On the stage you can suit your gags to your audience—I give 'em stuff at the Palladium—scientific gags," he laughed apologetically, "that I couldn't use in Halifax, let's say, to get a laugh, and *vice versa*.

"But you can't do that on the films.

"I often wonder," he went on, "how some films do go down in parts of America, like the Middle West—American films, I mean. Because, touring America as a vaudeville artist, you're continually playing to what might be different nations.

"I know—I've played in every English-speaking country in the world.

"But what I like about film work," Mr. Hay confessed, "is that it is constructive. You're building up a character all the time. Take Windbag—I've always wanted to play a sailor, but I've been doomed to a music-hall and film sequence of schoolmasters and family solicitors till now.

"Then there's another attraction about film work—when the picture's finished, you can forget it, and start creating a new character, not go on pulling down and building up again the same old figure like you have to do when you've established a stage routine.

"Hard work? Yes, of course it is, while you're working, but when I do finish a picture I go away for a cruise, take a few travel films myself, and come back fresh.

"Photography and cinephotography are hobbies of mine, you know," he explained, "as well as the stars. Some people think all I do in my spare time is to sit by my telescope.

"Yes, I'm very interested in the technical side of the films—one day perhaps I'll direct, that's what I'd really like to do. But I'm still learning . . ."

Not the least point of interest about these Will Hay films that Gainsborough are producing is that Mr. Hay writes the scripts himself. He is assisted, of course, by Director Beaudine—and Beaudine's "shadow," Bob Edmunds—but Hay is the real author, and as such knows how to suit his own particular style.

Unlike most, if not all other screen stars, he is not averse from 'gagging'—"though you have to be more careful than if you were on the stage," he admitted, "because if you 'dry' the others up, it probably means a re-take."

I bent forward confidentially.

"And it's your honest opinion," I whispered, "that British films really do stand up to comparison with American ones?"

Will Hay nodded. "Honest," he said. "After all, you see some pretty bad American films sometimes, don't you? Well, you see bad English ones too. But you see some jolly good ones, American and British."

"Such as——" I began.

"Mr. Hay—wanted on the set," called a voice down the passages.

Perhaps the voice was aptly prophetic.

DENIS MYERS

News from Denham

EVERY STUDIO AT DENHAM is occupied, either by the current productions of London Films or by tenant companies. The tenants include Capitol, for whom Bergner is making an English version of *Dreaming Lips;* New World Pictures, who, having completed their Technicolour film, *Wings of the Morning*, will soon commence production on *Under the Red Robe;* and Pall Mall Productions still shooting the Paderewski film, *Moonlight Sonata*, in which Marie Tempest is also playing. Besides Pommer's company, whose first English picture, *Fire over England*, is almost finished, there is a new tenant, Atlantic Films, for whom Marion Gering is directing *Thunder in the City*, with Edward G. Robinson, Constance Collier, Nigel Bruce and Miss Deste.

A stream of sightseers is coming every evening to Denham to watch the departure of Dietrich, making *Knight without Armour* for London Films. Robert Donat is her knight in the midst of 1917 revolutionary St. Petersburg.

Another London Films picture, *Dark Journey*, stars Veidt; while Miriam Hopkins and Gertrude Lawrence are two sides of a triangle in *Men Are Not Gods*. Flaherty is also on location at Denham for *Elephant Boy*.

London Films casting department is beginning to look for suitable Romanesque types for the proposed Laughton film, *I Claudius*, adapted from the novel of Robert Graves; it is likely to go into production within a couple of months.

Meanwhile Pommer has sent a unit out east to shoot material for *Troop Ship*, 'the essentially English subject which had to be thought of by an Austrian'; and Miles Malleson, Walter Hudd and a host of technical advisers are cooling their heels waiting for the Arabs to settle their disputes with the Jews before they can go ahead with *Lawrence of Arabia*.

IT WOULDN'T HURT HITCHCOCK...

An Open Letter

DEAR HITCHCOCK,

I hope you did not stop reading film magazines after the last instalment of your memoirs had appeared in one of them, because, if so, you missed two pronouncements which, I humbly submit, you might find it worth while to study.

I refer to an interview with Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur and an article by Francis Lederer. I would particularly draw your attention to the following sentences. First, Mr. Hecht:

> *They (the people in Hollywood) spend all their time at present producing, directing and acting in pictures that are pure tripe. It wouldn't hurt them to spend just a little of their time and money to make pictures that are really worth while.*

Then Mr. Lederer:—

> *Just to entertain people in the cinema is really a waste of time. . . . To create happiness where no happiness is; to banish fear and restore hope and zest for living—these should be the aims of the motion picture. In doing these things it cannot fail in its avowed mission, which is to entertain. But it will take on a greater power with purpose.*

'And what,' you will be asking no doubt, 'has all this, admirable sentiments though they may be, to do with me? Why pick on me?'

I pick on you because the words of these two men are even more applicable to the British film industry than they are to Hollywood, because you are generally recognised as Britain's cleverest film director, and because, ever since I saw a flock of sheep follow a shot of a crowded dance floor in *Champagne*, I have followed your career with the closest attention. I believed, and still believe, that some day you will produce a film that will make the world sit up.

I have picked on you because the words of Messrs. Hecht and Lederer do not seem to have attracted as much response from the British film industry—if they have attracted any at all—as they deserve; and because I hope that you, as leading director of one of the most influential producing organisations in the country, will be able to do something about it.

I have picked on you because while it would be grossly inaccurate to label your films 'pure tripe,' it would, I think, be fair criticism to say that apart from *Juno and the Paycock* and *The Skin Game*, not one of them has had a theme that mattered a damn.

In recent years you have produced nothing but melodramas, excellent, it is true, but none the less melodramas, and that, I feel, for a man of your talents—in some respects one might almost say genius—is a shameful waste of time. If you do not agree, apply Mr. Lederer's test of what should be the aims of the film to your own work, apart from the two I have excepted. Does one of them pass that test? I think not.

In some recent publicity material sent out by your studio you were made to say this:—

> *I am out to give the public good healthy mental 'shake ups.' Civilisation has become so screening and sheltering that we cannat experience sufficient thrills at first hand. Therefare, to prevent us becoming sluggish and jellified, we have to experience them artificially, and the screen is the best medium for this.*

Overlooking the fact that expert opinion would probably tell us that civilisation is getting much less safe and far more trying, what is there particularly stimulating to the mentality in any of the last four films you have made? Surely the 'shake up' provided by this type of picture is to the emotions, not to the mind.

I suggest that it is high time that you stopped making mere thrillers, entertaining though they are, and got down to what Miss Lejeune would call a real job of film making. Why should we leave it to Hollywood to make films like *The Story of Louis Pasteur* and *Fury*, and others with a social content and commentary on our times? You could have made a brilliant job of a theme like the theme of *Fury*. Why didn't you?

It cannot be because your employers will not give you the scope, because in this same publicity interview I found this tribute to them:—

> *Finally, I have been very lucky. My ideas, my methods, my tricks in film production have all been given free play. I have been allowed to experiment. This, I owe to one man, Michael Balcon.*

Your films must have made a lot of money for Gaumont-British, and I think Mr. Hecht's words apply with as much force to them as to Hollywood producers:—*It wouldn't hurt them to spare a little of their time and money to make pictures that are really worth while.*

LESLIE B. DUCKWORTH

Meetings and Acquaintances

M. A. C. GORHAM, on the staff of the B.B.C. for ten years and editor of the *Radio Times* for three years, calls for a pint of draught and maintains that the pink-fingered gentry behind modern bars know nothing of beer. His three million circulation sits lightly on stout shoulders. His new series, *The World We Listen In*, seeks to collect fresh viewpoints on radio. Hilaire Belloc, H. M. Tomlinson and Humbert Wolfe have already spoken their pieces. Vernon Bartlett, C. E. M. Joad, H. M. Brailsford, Denis Johnston and others will follow. Gorham wants, like many others, to create a real body of criticism for radio. He talks of *The World We Listen In* as a new and necessary forum. To the suggestion that he himself should contribute since he talks so well on radio possibilities outside his province, and to the notion that one view from Broadcasting House is worth a dozen from outside, Gorham replies diplomatically and refers further enquiries to Sir Stephen Tallents. They are hereby referred.

GUSTAV MACHATY, famous Czecho-Slovakian director of *Extase*, is having trouble with his Italian productions on his latest film *Ballerine*.

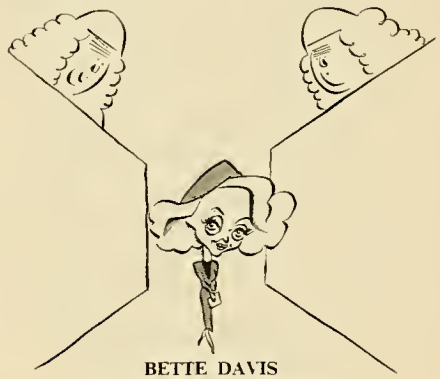
While on holiday he learned that the company had changed not only plans for synchronisation but some of the dialogue and had even recut the film, introducing sound where he had wanted none. Being a brave man he did not ignore this mutilation but cabled a hot protest to Signor Mussolini. Finally he extracted a promise from Luigi Freddi, chief of the Cinematographic Department of the Ministry, that his interests would be attended to in future.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON, Hollywood's famous 'tough guy,' is making his first British picture for Atlantic Films. It is a £120,000 picture, *Thunder in the City*, and Robinson is the thunder.

Born in Bucharest in 1893, Robinson was taken to America by his parents when he was still a small boy. Educated in New York, he took an M.A. degree at Columbia University. He was intended for the ministry, but his ambitions turned first to law and then to the theatre. For sixteen years he was a successful actor, leaving the stage for Hollywood six years ago.

Eddie Robinson's success in 'tough guy' characters is due not to type casting, but to his astute observation of American life as a whole. He talks with equal interest of American industry, politics, finance and art. He is aware of the whys and wherefores of the cinema industry. He has also formed opinions as to how the British cinema can best develop, and his advice is to 'keep off imitation and develop an industry characteristic of England; learn from American technicians, but don't be slaves to Hollywood methods.'

In his new film, Robinson plays a 'tough guy' who is too tough even for America. In private life, far from playing his famous 'ballyhooer,' Robinson studies languages and collects modern French paintings and classical gramophone records. He is, in fact, anything but Public Enemy No. 1.



BETTE DAVIS
The girl with the contracts (*Vicky*)

NED MANN'S job in life is to trick the public, and it is a hard life, for the trick business is like the Labyrinth, difficult to get out of once you are in it. Neither producers, directors nor cameramen know what it is to invent tricks, and so they ask for them at the last moment. The art of trick is not to let your audience know where the trick begins and ends; if they guess it spoils their fun. Mann is back at Denham after a trip to Hollywood. He is devising tricks for a dozen or so new productions. The Spanish Armada is floating in a tank, and rubber elephants are being made to dance. "Stars and directors come and go, but the trick-man goes on for ever—that is unless he ends in the bug house or throws himself out of a stunt machine." Mann cheerfully catalogues the fate of half of Hollywood's ace trick-men and decides that most of them went 'nuts' over their own ideas. In a few months his contract with Korda expires, and he intends to take a vacation, but it is sure to be a busman's holiday for he could not help but invent a rope trick or two.

Pictures in Poland

By W.F.N.'s Warsaw Correspondent

Polish films are seen by emigrés in the U.S.A., Palestine and the Baltic countries. Chicago has a Polish population of 500,000

POLAND IS LARGELY an agricultural country and because of its poverty has few cinemas. For 34 million inhabitants there are only 700 theatres, 600 of which have sound equipment.

There are various obstacles in the way of production: the film market is small and the language of the country raises difficulties so far as export is concerned. American distributors dominate the home market, but most of the pictures shown are weak and there are few home box office successes. The Polish public prefers Austrian comedies—with such stars as Franciska Gall and Paula Vessely.

French, German, English and Russian films are seldom shown; German films being boycotted by the Jewish owners who own the majority of the cinemas, and the English films, such as *Things to Come*, *The Ghost Goes West*, and *Henry VIII*, appealing only to the sophisticated and to the intelligentsia. Some Russian pictures are shown and *Road to Life* and *The Youth of Maxim* were two that achieved some success.

Polish film production dates from 1915 when Pola Negri made her first film in Warsaw. At that time sensational and erotic subjects were favoured and the technical level was low. After the War, independence brought a certain improvement in the film industry but unhealthy conditions retarded development. Directors prepared scenarios, chose stars, made sure of credits in laboratories and studios, and began production with an eye to cash. Temporary companies were formed which had often to hold up production to look for money which, when obtained, was usually accompanied by severe conditions imposed by the financiers. In many cases the would-be film producer would often take round to theatre managers photographs from films which he would say were in course of production in order to get the money with which to begin making the pictures.

Success, under these conditions, depended upon sensational subject matter, popular stars and patriotic appeal. Such conditions together with the inexperience of the technicians, made inferior film production inevitable.

A crude patriotism dominated the subject matter of Polish Films for a long time; soldiers and the fight against Tsarist-Russian dominion over Poland were regarded as an indispensable condition of box office success. Naïve melodramas were made starring Jadiwiga Smosarska, a favourite actress with the middle-classes. Comedies were made on the lines of German and Austrian farces and their poor treatment spoilt such talented acting as that of Adolf Dymsza.

There have been noticeable improvements during the last few years, particularly on the technical side. Cameramen can now draw upon their own and upon foreign experts' experience and production is much more efficiently organised. The most influential man in the industry is Stefan Dekierowski, owner of the only well-equipped studio and laboratory in Warsaw. Starting ten years ago in a basement-laboratory he is now the Polish Will Hays and his organising ability and financial acumen are powerful factors in the present day production of feature films. Polish production is increasing considerably, mainly because the Government helps producers by granting certain tax-reductions. About 30 feature films and some 700 shorts are released yearly.

Though technical level and organisation have been raised, the subjects have not changed. Efforts to adapt for the screen national literary masterpieces have proved disappointing. One of the most prominent Polish directors is Michal Waszynski, who produces efficient, cheap box office successes. He makes two films at a time, works like an automaton and produces comedies and dramas which, though cheap and mediocre, are always well-received by the public.

Leytes, whose picture *The Day of Great Adventure* was shown at the London Film Society, is a director worth mentioning, for, though his ideas are inconsistent, he has shown a correct sense of photography and cutting. *Under Thy Protection*, of which he was the author, managed with its patriotic-religious appeal to be both popular and well produced.

Among other prominent directors is Alex Ford, author of the sport-short reviewed in *W.F.N.*, who has been very much influenced by the Soviet Cinema. His picture about Warsaw Newsboys, *The Legion of the Street*, showed his undoubted ability as a director.

Juljusz Garden produced some interesting cultural films in the silent days, but such films are rarely produced now, because of the limited markets at home and abroad.

Polish films reach the centres of emigration in U.S.A.—Chicago, for example, where there are 500,000 Poles—Palestine, where the majority of the Jews speak Polish, and Baltic countries, but are barred from the Western market.

In 1931 criticism of the low standards and level of film production resulted in the formation of a Film Society called *Start*. This body was formed by a group of students whose aim was to study film art and to initiate propaganda for better films. The Society did a great deal by introducing into Poland the films of René Clair, Eisenstein and Ivens. Several members of this society started their own production of shorts. The Government, anxious to promote higher standards in film production, gives special facilities to those shorts described as artistic or instructional. In this field one finds many films made purely for propaganda or advertising purposes, and also *avant garde* films. The films of F. and S. Themerson (*Europe* and *Electricity*), Ford's *Ready, Go!*, Cekalski's *Danger*, *Coalmine* and *Folk Dances*, Emmer and Maliniak's *The Polesie District*, are worth noticing. The best production is organised by the Polish Institute of Social Problems, which tries to secure artistic and social success for its films. Two new cameramen, educated abroad, Wohl and Lipinsk, have set up a high standard for artistic and technical work.

Newsreels are produced in Poland by the Telegraph Agency, P.A.T., which has a monopoly of the market.

A new company, financially sound, has lately given feature production a new start. It is the Polish Film Company (P.S.F.), managed by the late general manager of Polish Radio-Chamiec. Polish people await its achievements with interest for it is hoped that the new company will raise the prestige of film production to the level of Polish theatre and music which is proud of such names as Paderewski and Morzejewska.

"The Interloper" (Przybylski)

Tiflis in the Caucasus Makes Thirty Films a Year

By Mack W. Schwab

THE DIVISION OF THE U.S.S.R. into Autonomous Republics and Autonomous Regions is primarily one of language and race. The Central Government has made a special point of encouraging and fostering the particular culture of each of these National Minorities. This is as evident in the field of motion pictures as in other fields of creative expression. Not only are movies produced in the largest and capital Republic, that is, The Russian Republic, at Moscow and Leningrad, but in most of the larger Minority districts. Local artists film local material in the language of the area as well as in Russian.

Of course, there is no rigid apportioning of subject matter and language. Films are made by the Moscow and Leningrad studios in other languages than Russian and treating of material from all over the Soviet Union. Dovjenko from the Ukrainian Republic studio at Kiev journeyed to the border of China to film his picture, *Frontier*. But, as a whole, the studios of Moscow and Leningrad have a more general approach to Soviet life, while the studios of the Minorities deal with the special problems and themes of their district.

The State Motion Picture Industry of Georgia has one of the best of these National Minority studios at Tiflis, the capital of the Republic, on the southern slopes of the Caucasus.

Before the Revolution the film equipment in Tiflis, what there was of it, belonged to a local commercial photographer. It consisted of a still camera, and a primitive developing laboratory. There was no movie apparatus.

In 1921, the Georgian Motion Picture Industry was officially conceived. A small group of Young Georgians, who had gained some experience in motion picture and still photography during the War and Revolution, took over the abovementioned laboratory and added a motion picture camera. Professional actors and actresses from the local theatres volunteered their services. An almost complete lack of film stock at that time prevented an ambitious programme. At first the practical results were mainly newsreel documents and experience.

In time, however, a definite professional organisation was established, and by 1926 full length pictures were being made. It was at this date that the Soviet Government gave the Georgian group money to build an up-to-date studio. Three years ago, a well-equipped laboratory for the developing of films and office buildings were added. A new sound stage is now in the process of construction. Except for a special effects department, which most of the Soviet studios lack, the Tiflis studio is up to date in equipment with movieolas, a camera crane, dollies, and a handsome projection room.

They make about eight full length pictures a year in both Georgian and Russian, and in addition newsreels, and two documentaries a month on such regional educational subjects as *Malaria*. An animated cartoon department has already produced one cartoon in black and white, and is working on a second in colour. The first with Georgian music as a background is about a Georgian shepherd who, with the aid of a machine (educational propaganda), overcomes his animal enemies. The second ends on a note of animal solidarity.

Eight directors are at present employed by the studio. Thirty actors and actresses recruited mostly from the Georgian professional theatres are under contract.

"Golden Valley"

The present shooting schedule includes *Dareeko*, a film about a young Caucasian heroine who was active in the revolutionary movement of 1905; a movie version of the Georgian play, *Arsen*, which was staged at the Theatre Festival this year, describing the half legendary, half historical poet of the mountains, who in 1830 led the natives in a revolt against their feudal lords; and *Golden Valley*, a contemporary story dealing with a conflict on an orange plantation near the Georgian city of Batum.

The director of *Golden Valley*, Shengalaya, a Georgian poet in his thirties, has been working with the Tiflis studio for some time. In the silent days he produced *Twenty-Six Commisars*.

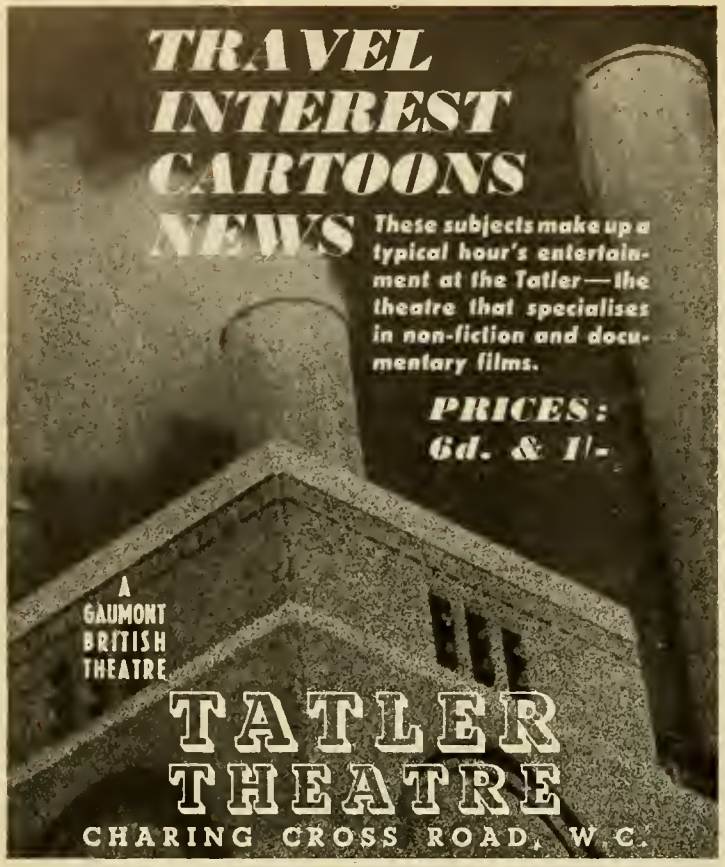
Chiaureli, who is directing *Arsen*, is the most famous figure of the Tiflis studio. He produced the first important Georgian sound film, *The Last Masquerade*, in 1933. For his achievements in developing Georgian motion pictures, he received the Order of Lenin in 1935. Chiaureli was an actor and theatrical director before he became interested in the cinema.

Making pictures in both Georgian and Russian presents a considerable technical problem. Each shot must be duplicated in Russian after it has been shot in Georgian. The cast should, therefore, be bilingual. The professional actors for the most part speak Russian perfectly, as do all the younger generation who are taught Russian along with Georgian in school, but for many of the minor characters, especially the older less-well-educated mountaineers, Russian is often too difficult. This factor necessitates a certain amount of dubbing, adding Russian after the scene has been shot. Because of this language difficulty, film production is slow. From six months to a year is the average time for the shooting of a picture there.

Aside from the actual production of picture, the members of the Tiflis studio contact personally as often as possible the Georgian movie audiences through lectures at workers' clubs and informal discussions of their films after public showings.

Stalin may well be proud of what the boys of the home State are doing in the world of motion pictures.

"Golden Valley," directed by Shengalaya



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HOLLYWOOD'S INFLUENCE ON THE ARGENTINE

by WINIFRED HOLMES

"BRITISH FILMS? They lie down and go to sleep or just sit still in the middle for a few moments to let the heroine with the long, long face, and the hero so stiff and correct, have a polite chat and tell you everything that you knew a long time before! In Argentina we do not care for that kind of film. We like movement and suspense and wit—everything in fact that North American films have. Perhaps Hollywood's films are based on slight or silly stories, like *My Man Godfrey*, for instance. But how they move! How polished and witty they are! And sophisticated! *My Man Godfrey* and *Mr. Deeds*, which is even better, will have a huge success in my country."

These searching remarks were made to me by a distinguished Argentine gentleman the other day. and are somewhat vanity-pricking now that we are beginning to think British films are as good as Hollywood's. But they are true for all Latin America. British films are not on the South American map at all. Our type of "long-faced" beauty is not appreciated; the comedy of Gracie Fields, Cicely Courtneidge, the Hulberts or Ralph Lynn-Tom Walls is too national and purely Anglo-Saxon to appeal to the Spanish-Italian-Portuguese races of the continent.

The Private Life of Henry VIII was the first British film to win appreciative audiences in the Argentine Republic. United Artists, which is of course an American company, distributed it, and was careful to leave unstressed the fact that it was British. Immediately it was tremendously popular and won a public for Korda's successive films, *Catherine the Great*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, and *The Ghost Goes West*. Those films have been popular all over the South American continent, and so have *The Thirty-nine Steps* and *Evergreen*. Madeleine Carroll and Jessie Matthews have become fairly popular stars, though the strict critic of British girls and films before quoted said, "If they haven't long faces, English film stars have terrible voices—they shouldn't open their mouths."

Publicity kept it dark that English stars working in Hollywood were English—stars like Charlie Chaplin, Ronald Colman and Boris Karloff. Yet the strange thing is that with the Argentine, England is far more popular politically and sentimentally than the United States, and British businesses have a higher reputation for honesty and reliability. There is, too, a big British colony of more than 50,000 people—considerably larger than the American colony. It is just that in the people's mind the cinema is Hollywood and Hollywood the cinema.

Italian and Spanish films are not good enough to appeal to the highly critical South American audiences in spite of ties of sentiment and language. French films are few and far between; German films too heavy for their taste; English films too slow. Hollywood reigns supreme.

The Argentine has always been film-crazy. Pleasure and luxury-loving, the people have raised cinema-going into the greatest social event except the opera, in the country. The picture house in every small town and village is the hub of social life. Bright lights shine, bells ring outside to attract your attention, young bloods go to inspect the local lovelies and girls to peep at eligible young men. The building itself is probably the most spectacular in the place, and inside it is extremely luxurious.

Prices are lower than in England. Two pesos (about 1*s.* 6*d.*) is the highest price even in Buenos Ayres, and best seats in provincial cinemas are seldom more than one peso. Film magazines are legion and are beautifully got up and printed. National dailies run regular film pages and features. *La Nasion* of Buenos Ayres has film correspondents in European as well as pan-American capitals.

"Coming to England ten years ago from Buenos Ayres, one was chiefly struck," said an Anglo-Argentine, "by the absence of cinemas in London and the low esteem cinema-going was held by the English public. It was almost 'not quite nice' or at least slumming to see a film, whereas out there it was quite the most chic thing to do to go to the 'ciné,' and one had to be able to talk about the latest film and the most popular star of the moment to enjoy much social success. Now of course it is different in England, and the cinema is fashionable and blue-blooded, while gala premières attract the smartest audiences, as they do in the Argentine."

Lavishness and luxury are great characteristics of Argentine life and the cinema ministers to the demand for them in its gorgeous sets, clothes, buildings and "high-life." It has affected their ideas considerably, especially in their attitude towards women. Ten years ago this was purely Spanish: women of good family and reputation were heavily chaperoned and secluded from strangers. They stayed in the home and made the family their chief circle and interest. Even highly important and distinguished visitors would be entertained by Argentine gentlemen at their clubs or hotels and never taken home to "meet the wife."

The cinema has put the emancipated North American girl on the scene and has altered very largely the Argentine conception of womanhood. Girls may now drive cars and shop unattended in the city streets; married women too have more freedom. The cinema has affected these ideas far more in the New World than in the Old—in Spain, Portugal, Italy, which are the mother countries to most of the South American peoples, the cinema is not a national habit to the same extent, but only a luxury of the biggest cities. It has therefore not undermined the old strict ideas of behaviour.

"Grace Moore tops the list"

"Grand material for Gaucho films of the Western type."

But the United States has put across more than its ideals of emancipated womanhood by means of its films. These have been, consciously or unconsciously, excellent propaganda for American architecture, house decoration, modes of living, dress, language, and for more specific things such as her cars. That American cars are wonders for rough roads and hard usage, as well as being luxurious and showy for city use, is shown in almost every Hollywood film with a modern setting. The result is that the Argentine uses American cars almost exclusively.

Hollywood has cornered the distributing business throughout the Republic. Its representatives showed their far-sightedness when, ten years ago, it was impossible to take money out of the Argentine, and British distributors were frightened off in consequence; they stayed in the country and consolidated their position, content to wait for better times to get their rewards. These they are now reaping in full measure and British distributors have to be content with the pickings.

Love of music is the chief national characteristic, and all world-reputed musicians have their seasons in Buenos Ayres. Consequently operatic and musical films are most popular of all, and Grace Moore tops the list of stars by a long way. Argentine production has wisely started by catering to this national demand. Short films starring popular Argentine singers of straight music or of national dance tunes such as the Tango and the Sambas have been made and have won success. Carlos Gaudel, the "Richard Tauber of Argentina," made several such films before he died recently; Mercedes Simon, popular song singer, has made others.

Argentine production, when it comes to more ambitious efforts, falls very short and is not popular with the highly critical public. There is grand material in the country, however, for magnificent gaucho films of the North American "Western" type. The industry is not sufficiently organised or capitalised for these to be a practical proposition yet.

The three main producing companies are *Argentine Films*, *Technofilm* and *Photografie Terra*.

"A HALL OF HAT-BOXES"

Quick and Simple Set Building

SPEED IS THE ESSENTIAL factor in producing a commercial documentary which is released weekly, and this is achieved by eliminating all non-essential stages, so that the resultant system is capable of presenting a regular supply of reels of the highest technical and photographic quality. Such production rapidity must necessarily run through the entire organisation—from the selecting of subjects, and the brief scripting of them, to the stages when they are shot, cut and synchronised. Each group must work at the same speed, or it will become overloaded by the output of the preceding group. However, the most vivid example of such rapid production is seen in the studio, where settings are erected and dismantled in less time than it takes the representatives of an average studio conference to sit down and light their cigars. There is no time to hold meetings, to draw up elaborate blue prints, carry out research work in museums, or to arrange for camera and colour tests. We have to get on with the job at once, and so Studio magazine production has reduced everything to a minimum.

But the major point is that the results must compare favourably with the most elaborate settings and effects in feature films, which are the results of endless conferences, blue prints, and expense. Our work must be perfect, and original. Accordingly, we plan to shoot say, five subjects in nine hours, and these items are so arranged that each set shall form an integral part of the next, or, alternatively, shall be so constructed that by dismantling a portion of one, another shall be revealed. The day usually begins with the smallest set, and ends with the largest. We may commence with the corner of a surgery—plain cream walls, with, perhaps, a door, that neither opens nor shuts, so that as soon as the subject has been shot, it may be pulled off, leaving the plain walls. On to these, further flats are quickly added, thereby doubling the set, and possibly a central circle will be added to form the entrance to a boudoir. Into the right-angled corners, tall half circular pillars will be placed, with silver bands around them.

Whilst this is being shot, the builders (there are three of them) are making a long, low wall, and fastening to its top a slanting piece of wood to resemble a tiled roof. This, when roughly painted and marked, and erected in front of the plain cream backing, will look like a Mexican shack. A few slender pieces of wood, painted black, are grouped against the skyline to represent tall trees, and a cardboard cactus in the foreground helps the illusion. Underlit, this set proves most effective, and after a few bags of sand have been emptied on to the floor, the job is ready for the camera. However, the next item may be a modernist apartment, and so the sand is swept up, the Mexican shack removed, the plain backing is split in the middle and into the gap a long modern window is inserted, which was being made whilst shooting was going on in Mexico!

By this means, we never produce less than four subjects a day, in settings which symbolise the items without in any way distracting from them. Recently we built a "hall of hatboxes"—giant ones—and although there seemed to be piles of these monsters, actually there were none, for the central pile of round ones was made by placing bands of wood round a long column, and the plain backing appeared to consist of many square ones, merely by nailing similar pieces of wood here and there over it, and sticking crêpe paper into the tops of each, to represent ribbon.

We have built almost everything in our time, from portions of the Heavens, to a reproduction of the bed of the Atlantic. This we did with lots of card, painted in blueish greys, which we arrayed in rock-like formation. A broomstick with a piece of wood across it, and a rag, looked like the remains of a wreck embedded in the rocks. We then found a *genuine* use for newspapers by cutting them into jagged strips, and pinning them to the rocks. Concealed electric fans made the paper ripple gently, representing seaweed, and two thicknesses of net drawn across the entire set completed the illusion. This is all done on a floor about 20 ft. across and 40 ft. long.

A.B.

SLAP-UP SETS FOR THE G.B. MAGAZINE

Mr. Baker of Butcher's

In 1897 F. W. Baker was turning the new-fangled "movie-camera" on Queen Victoria's Jubilee procession. Later he filmed the coronation of King Edward VII, and the coronation of George V, but next year he will not be turning on Edward VIII coronation for in the meantime he has become a very important figure in the film industry. He is now managing director of Butcher's Film Service, a member of the Board of Trade Advisory Committee, a Governor of the

Mr. F. W. Baker

British Film Institute and treasurer of the Kinematograph Renters' Society. Thirty-eight years ago he was a dentist but gave up that career to join the American Biograph Company at the Palace Theatre. In those days an ambitious cinema in Oxford Street was showing travel pictures and to enhance the idea of travel they had the auditorium rocked back and forward to give the illusion of travelling at speed.

In the past few years Butcher's have produced a large number of variety pictures and they introduced Will Fyffe and George Formby to the screen. Mr. Baker explained that in spite of their well-known successes with variety pictures, they did not regard themselves as producing mainly this type of film; nevertheless they consider the music halls as a happy hunting ground for the discovery of film talent, and regularly keep an eye on the halls for the discovery of new players for the screen.

Among the pictures made by Butcher's have been a good many provincial "hits." The local popularity of music hall stars, combined with song, dance, sentiment, patriotism and strictly British humour have been responsible largely for their success. Among those have been *Our Fighting Navy*, *The Great Gay Road*, *Melody of My Heart*, *Shipmates o' Mine*, *Annie Laurie* and *Barnacle Bill*. Stars, other than Formby and Fyffe have included Madeleine Carroll, Sophie Stewart and Sybil Jason.

"We do not cater for the West End but for the big cinemas in the suburbs and the provinces. We appeal to mass audiences," said Mr. Baker to a *W.F.N.* representative.

"Audiences have changed very much in the past ten years. The slow-moving, sentimental type of film like Griffith's *Way Down East* would not appeal to-day. Nowadays there is a demand for sensation and gaiety. The public wants films with life and movement and with plenty of music and singing.

"The public insists, too, on value for their money, and there is no likelihood whatever that the two-feature programme will disappear. The public demands it and is likely to go on demanding it.

"The length of programme should not exceed 3¼ hours," Mr. Baker continued. "It is impossible to concentrate for longer and to give more is only to overfeed. Moreover, I do not think any good purpose is being served by the ultra-long pictures that are coming over from Hollywood. Most of them would get their job done within normal running time. From a producer's point of view it is certain that a longer picture has not greater box-office appeal."

Speaking of the collaboration of America with England, Mr. Baker said:

"Both John Maxwell and myself think that the quota quickie has done incalculable harm to British production. The standard of these films has been so low that the whole of the British industry has been brought into discredit. It is obvious that co-operation with the U.S.A. should mean better films."

As a Governor of the Film Institute Mr. Baker has some comments to make on educational pictures.

"As I see it," he said, "there are two types of educational picture. Firstly, ordinary entertainment films of the type of *Rhodes of Africa*, *Disraeli* or the Livingstone film. And secondly, the purely educational film which it seems to me will become in the future particularly useful for demonstration purposes in factories, where a process can be explained simply and immediately to hundreds of workers at a time."

Moral Codes at Portland Place

A public service like the B.B.C. is bound to have a clearly defined moral code. The important thing is to know just where the limits are.

A recent broadcast play, *Sailors of Cattaro*, offers a good illustration. The producer, Miss Barbara Burnham, is unusually enlightened for a B.B.C. producer, and it is therefore safe to assume that the riper passages in her text form the Ultima Thule of the B.B.C.'s mental world. Beyond are the uncharted seas of sedition, blasphemy and other dark, unmentionable things.

The expletives in the play were considerably toned down. "Christ" becomes "rotten"; "Goddam" and "scabs" drop right out. Of course, "balls to that" becomes "bunk to that." You can see the actual frontier in "Jesus, Mary and Joseph!" which becomes just "Mary and Joseph." "Your tails stick out of your pants" is deleted.

Although the play was about a revolt at sea, there were limits to what could be said about revolutions. Reference to the intervention against Russia and "The harbours are blockaded by the English" were cut out. "Shot to junk by the Britishers" came out, and a strike in the Daimler Motor Works became the "Adlum Motor Works."

A year or two back broadcasting policy trod on *Measure for Measure*. It was being produced on a Sunday afternoon, so the B.B.C. had to be particularly careful. The play got so knocked about that Pompey, who may be regarded as the norm around which all the other characters are grouped, was kicked right out of it. Poor Pompey's only offence was that he is sometimes a little bawdy. He says things like "Does your worship mean to geld and splay all the youth of the city?" But Sunday is Sunday and the B.B.C. is a "trustee for the nation's interest," as the Royal Charter commands, so Pompey had to go.

Last year the B.B.C. circulated to all its artists a list of subjects which were not to be mentioned before the microphone. These include: productions in which artists are themselves appearing, proprietary articles, religion (including spiritualism), marital infidelity, effeminacy in men and immorality of any kind, physical infirmities, diseases, M.D., and drunkenness. Billy Cotton broke this law with his "she, my brother" joke. A dance number, *Allah's holiday*, was changed to *Eastern holiday*. In another song *Hallelujah* became *Hi-de-hi*. The song *Love thy neighbour* was banned outright.

Hunger Marches are beyond the pale.

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REVIEW OF REVIEWS

EDITED BY H. E. BLYTH

THE TEXAS RANGERS. (King Vidor—Paramount.)
Jack Oakie, Fred MacMurray, Jean Parker.

Texas Rangers is one of those blessed pictures that are so good that you don't need to waste any time telling people. It is a sharp, hard story of the cleaning-up of the old West from Indians and hold-up men, and it has spectacle, drama, what-have-you, and sincerity. King Vidor directed it, and after a bunch of so-so pictures comes back, with this one, right to the top of the native American screen. *Texas Rangers* is the sort of irresistible picture that makes fans of us all.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

To come right out with it, *The Texas Rangers*, conceived by Paramount in recognition of this, the centennial year of the State of Texas, is pretty maudlin stuff. It recounts how the pervading *esprit de corps* of the Rangers used to encourage the recidivists of the day to abandon their ways of brigandry and join the forces of law and order or else—in order to make Texas a safe place to live in for everyone except a bandit named Polka-dot and any number of resentful Indians. Except for a bright characterisation by Jack Oakie and an equally pleasing sinister one by Lloyd Nolan, *The Texas Rangers* is simply a revival of a decadent cinema form, generically referred to as "cops and robbers."

—J. T. M., *The New York Times*

"The Texas Rangers"

Review of the Month

THE TEXAS RANGERS

If you wish heartily to enjoy your visits to films it is as well to leave your brains behind. Few moving pictures will bear thinking about. At the moment England is on the verge of a shattering revival in its cinemas of "Westerns." No one likes the wildness and vigour of this open-space stuff as well as I do. I remember with intense pleasure those old silent, swiftly-moving adventures with gallant cowboys and equally gallant Indians, the bold sheriff, the bad man, the shootings, the gallopings, the covered waggons, the hold-ups and all those highly exciting incidents that made early American history. But now that speech in its crudest, vulgarest and most primitive form has arrived to supplement all this bravery, this style of picture for me loses instead of gaining.

Is the new style Western really an improvement? Aggravated by gangster and G Men movies, are not the murders too many, the savageries too rampant, the horrors too sadistic? Take *Texas Rangers* for instance. True, it is rugged and colourful and it seeks to blend romance, melodrama and comedy. But the chief impressions left in my mind by it are of dead men with arrows protruding from their abdomens or their backs, of treachery behind triggers, and an insane disregard of death, displayed by each and all. Its hypocrisy in denouncing the barbarism of the Indian and exalting a gang of legalised murderers as heroes sickened me. Sloppy thinking only can explain the idealisation of ruffians who under the sham pretext of cleaning up a lawless continent seized other people's property, and themselves behaved worse than the bandits they set out to exterminate. Fred McMurray is a fine figure of a man. He has a grand way with him, a smiling, rough-neck, tough guy of the lovable sort. Don't stop to analyse the motives and the actions of the character he plays, but surrender yourself to the thrills they provide; and give yourself up wholly to the charms of adorable Jean Parker, who plays his sweetheart—and logic, ethics, and all those disturbing factors that come into everyday life but never enter a cinema may all go hang.

Jack Oakie is in the cast and is genially effective. King Vidor as director has arranged a startlingly realistic series of battle scenes between Redskins and Rangers and his "hold-ups" are equally well staged. We may, some of us, query the range of the Rangers' revolvers, but why be captious in such matters?

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS. (George B. Seitz—Reliance.)
Bruce Cabot, Randolph Scott, Henry Wilcoxon, Binnie Barnes, Heather Angel.

It needed but the lightning readjustment of my own mentality to that possessed by a child of twelve—a curiously simple process—for me to enjoy the picture with immense abandon. Its plot has the virtue of utter impossibility. The British Army, advancing through tangled forest-land against the French at Fort William Henry, is accompanied (incomprehensibly) by the colonel's two daughters. The daughters are lost, waylaid, trapped, rescued, re-trapped, half-burnt at the stake, and re-rescued. One, in a brief moment of authenticity, dies. The other lives to marry Hawkeye, the colonial trapper of her dreams. And if that isn't meat for every mother's son in England I'll tear up my back-numbers of *Tiger Tim's Weekly*.—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

A few children, here and there, satiated with the run of drama and underworld goings-on, may feel kindly toward *The Last of the Mohicans*, and the Boy Scouts may endorse the woodlore. However, I fear the usual impression will be that the studio raked in a collection of the meekest young gentlemen around the precincts, dressed them up like Indians, and told them to make whoopee.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

W.F.N. SELECTION

Sing, Baby, Sing	* *
The Texas Rangers	*
My Man Godfrey	*
Song of Freedom	*
The General Died at Dawn	*

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

The Texas Rangers
The Last of the Mohicans
Anthony Adverse
My Man Godfrey
Everybody Dance
The General Died at Dawn
Song of Freedom
The King Steps Out
Girls' Dormitory
The Man Who Changed His Mind
Hollywood Boulevard
Mickey's Circus
Sing, Baby, Sing

MY MAN GODFREY. (Gregory La Cava—Universal.)

William Powell, Carole Lombard, Alice Brady, Eugene Pallette, Alan Mowbray.

This picture is quite mad and extremely amusing. If you remember *Three Carnered Moon*, just imagine a story about a family at least 25 per cent crazier and you have a rough idea of the Bullocks of Park-avenue. They are society. The two daughters, Carole Lombard and Gail Patrick, are exquisitely gowned hangovers from the era of Bright Young Thingery. They go out one night with a party on a scavenger-hunt. One of the objects of the quest is a Forgotten Man. The elder daughter (Miss Patrick) tries to bring back alive a perfect specimen found living in a rubbish dump. So for most of the film you have Mr. Powell's adventures in this luxurious lunatic asylum the Bullocks call home. Carole Lombard really gives a character performance, discarding both her glamour and her polish for a brilliant study of romantic lunacy. Any girl who Lives an Act should hang her head in shame after seeing this glorious burlesque of the type. William Powell, as sanity amid dementia, has only to employ his normal light and graceful touch to be absolutely first rate. The dialogue is outstanding. Tchekov never wrote anything so lifelike—and when you come to think of it a lot of his characters weren't so sane either.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

EVERYBODY DANCE. (Charles Reisner—Gaumont-British.)

Cicely Courtneidge, Ernest Truex.

There is an infantile kind of glee about this picture, a delight in tumbles and tosses for their own sake, in the simple humour of smashing things and finding chickens under the coal-scuttle, that makes one forget at times that Miss Cicely Courtneidge has, in her own line, considerable talent for comedy, that Mr. "Chuck" Reisner, the American director, has never given her a chance to show it, and that the film, as a whole, is a combination of all the less distinguished qualities of American and British picturemaking. But she has, and he didn't, and it is. —C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

Everybady Dance stars Cicely Courtneidge as a night-club queen with a reputation as a "dangerous woman"; that charming little comedian, Ernest Truex, supports her; and Charles Reisner directed. I may have seen sillier pictures, but I don't know when, or where.

—Campbell Dixon, *The Daily Telegraph*

THE GENERAL DIED AT DAWN. (Lewis Milestone—Paramount.)

Gary Cooper, Madeleine Carroll.

The General Died at Dawn is set in contemporary China, where the war-lord Yang (Akim Tamiroff) and the young American champion of oppressed provinces (Gary Cooper) fight it out over a wide field of intrigue. Clifford Odets, who wrote the scenario, has therefore not been trenchbound; and the result of his collaboration with the camera is a superior film, continuously interesting and often quite genuinely terrible. He may very well have lacked a free hand with the love story, but it is doubtful that anyone in Hollywood directed him to write the set speeches. They are right, but this charming and modest fellow would not have said them. Fortunately the war-lord does not understand himself so well; it is he who merely by continuing to be himself carries the excellent moral with which Mr. Odets has been concerned.—Mark Van Doren, *The Natian*

The beautiful lady, the soldier of fortune, and a surrounding assembly of sinister little yellow men are luscious ingredients for melodrama; and they are most satisfactorily exploited in *The General Died at Dawn*. To be sure, so much happens in the story, such dashing in and out of railroad trains, Shanghai hotels, junks, and whatnot, that you can't pretend to follow everything that is going on. There's a fine junk scene, with dark and lowering clouds, a threat in the air of imminent Chinese tortures to be employed even upon the person of the fair villainess, become by this time a hapless heroine, and an escape that isn't as obvious as such things generally are, and has, indeed, a nice Ming ring to it. Dressed up to kill in Milestone's richest furbelows, all this adventure and excitement should provide almost anyone with a snug hour and a half.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

SONG OF FREEDOM. (J. Elder Wills—British Lion.)

Paul Robeson, Elizabeth Welch, Esme Percy.

Song of Freedom is the story of Zinga, a black London dockhand, who, unknown to himself, is the descendant of a seventeenth-century "queen" of Cassanga, an island off the West Coast of Africa. Born in London he remains an exile at heart, passionately longing for some knowledge of his home. Apart from the profound beauty of Miss Elizabeth Welch and Mr. Robeson's magnificent singing of inferior songs, I find it hard to say in what the charm of this imperfect picture lies. The direction is distinguished but not above reproach, the story is sentimental and absurd, and yet a sense stays in the memory of an unsophisticated mind fumbling on the edge of simple and popular poetry. The best scenes are the dockland scenes, the men returning from work, black and white in easy companionship free from any colour bar, the public-house interiors, dark faces pausing at tenement windows to listen to Zinga's songs, a sense of nostalgia. There are plenty of faults even here, sentiment too close to sentimentality, a touch of "quaintness" and patronage, but one is made aware all the time of what Mann calls "the gnawing surreptitious hankering for the bliss of the commonplace," the general exile of our class as well as the particular exile of the African.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

It is a moving story of a dock labourer who becomes an opera star to satisfy his longing to help his own West African people—an aspiration which is Robeson's own. Produced with much skill and sincerity, the picture lacks the best in subtlety and dialogue, and the Cockney overacting is also a defect; but it is excellent stuff.

—P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

THE KING STEPS OUT. (Josef von Sternberg—Columbia.)

Grace Moore, Franchot Tone, Walter Connolly, Herman Bing.

This new film for Miss Grace Moore is by no means as operatic as some of its predecessors, and is all the better for ceasing to pay any desultory and incongruous homage to high art. Here there are no excerpts from grand opera with a loose plot to connect and explain them, but simply a musical comedy with the usual entertainments that accompany a setting in Vienna. There are royal personages in disguise, true love victorious over statecraft, comic politicians, soldiers, inn-

"The General Died at Dawn"

keepers, and the rest, jokes about beer, much local colour, handsome dresses and interiors, and a sprightly heroine who makes it her business to scandalise a solemn and ceremonial court. In this part Miss Moore displays at length a talent for vivacious low comedy which she has not always been allowed to indulge in the past. Her singing is as accomplished as ever, but the film has no pompous preparations for it and allows her songs to slip easily into the story.

—*The Times*

Mr. Deeds leaves Town, and the King Steps In. With fanfare of trumpets? Yes, but the trumpets are tin. With a pæan of song, for salute? Yes, but the songs are so much melted sugar. With Grace Moore, by way of company? Yes, but with what a fall from Grace. Made-up to resemble no one so closely as Ginger Rogers; bouncing hither, flouncing thither, tripping, skipping (but especially tripping) with the spry, well-intentioned agility of Lilian Harvey, Miss Moore has sunk her own personality and become a woman so composite that I lost count of her at half-time. She plays, with no sign of evident enjoyment, a princess who masquerades as a dressmaker; and, as a dressmaker, worms her way into an Emperor's heart. Which would be fine and dandy, if Franchot Tone (who plays the Emperor) showed any indication of having a heart. Wherever it may have been, it was not in his rôle. I left, with the queasy, uncomfortable suspicion that (temporarily) the Wings of Song were moulting.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

THE MAN WHO CHANGED HIS MIND. (Robert Stevenson—Gaumont-British.)

Boris Karloff, Anna Lee, John Loder.

The Man Who Changed His Mind won't add to the reputation Robert Stevenson made with *Tudor Rose*; neither will it do him much harm. Karloff fans will find it fair average entertainment. John Loder is a trifle jaunty at times for a man who believes his sweetheart to be in peril, and Anna Lee, as a girl scientist, suffers from the English ingénue's determination to make it quite clear to everybody that film acting is rather a rag. Karloff, by way of contrast, plays another of his mad scientists with a realism that suggests he keeps meeting them.

—Campbell Dixon, *The Daily Telegraph*

Now here is a novelty. A Boris Karloff picture at which you will laugh *when the film intends you to laugh*. This revolutionary infusion of humour in a Karloff charade among the test-tubes of horrific science is due to my friend Robert Stevenson, who, having made himself world-famous with his first job of direction, *Tudor Rose*, turns quietly to this efficient and interesting piece of melodramatic nonsense. The neatness of the handling of this picture tempts me to think, I hope not rashly, that Stevenson, given his head, will never make a bad picture.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD. (Robert Florey—Paramount.)

Francis X. Bushman, Betty Compson, Maurice Costello, Mae Marsh, John Halliday, Gary Cooper.

From the title you can infer that this is a glorification of the Californian Great White Way, the street which crosses that particularly ugly section of Los Angeles which the world wrongly imagines to be the core of the film business—actually some miles away. Wandering along it in the picture you meet Francis X. Bushman, Maurice Costello, Betty Compson, Mae Marsh, Charles Ray, Jack Mulhall, Bryant Washburn, and a dozen other stars of other days. Among the moderns, who play in the story proper and are not exhibited in the human waxworks exhibition, are John Halliday, who gives a fine performance as a faded star, Esther Ralston, and the saturnine Henry Gordon. There is also a tale somewhere about a ruthless publisher who buys and breaks the heart of a forgotten man, once a movie idol.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

MICKEY'S CIRCUS. (Walt Disney.)

Mickey's Circus was a *very* good one. Mickey was walking along a wire at the top of the tent when Donald Duck, who was bicycling on the wire, ran into Mickey. And then Mickey's nephews, the twins, turned on the 14-volt electricity, and blue sparks fly everywhere. Then the wire is cut, and they fall into the seal tubs, which some of the orphans have put below. Then all the seals come after them, thinking they are fish. The baby seal is best.—P.S. I think Mickey silent is much better than Mickey talking. —Tony Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

ANTHONY ADVERSE. (Mervyn Leroy—Warner Brothers.)

Fredric March, Olivia de Havilland, Edmund Gwenn, Claude Rains, Anita Louise.

Like *David Copperfield*, this is a production which combines the skill and the arts and the resources of a great studio: it is treated with reverence, it wears an aura. And like *David Copperfield*, it succeeds in holding one's attention; occasionally it produces a limp thrill, quite often it produces an appreciative pleasure at the skill with which the film-medium has been used to tell what is essentially not a motion picture story. It's just the old fable of the orphan cheeild who made good. All the time-worn props are there. The little locket around baby's neck is represented by a twelve-inch image of the Virgin. The coincidental reunion with the lonely grandpap. The frustrated true love. The girl who becomes a great opera singer. Career versus marriage. Love versus gold, etc. The thing was evidently dressed up in a lot of prime slushy poetic prose, but just listen to the denuded dialogue and you get the real juice of the epique. "I do love you! I do!" "And your price?" . . . "your name in marriage!"

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

It is a very able and variegated piece of production, centring on Fredric March, who, in the title-rôle, has done the finest work of his career. In spite of its length—more than once it seemed it might be called the *March of Time*—the effort to cram in as much as possible of the book has resulted in full dramatic force being missed by its episodic treatment. Yet I do not see how it could be better done; which means, I suppose, that long novels are not good screen material. Memorable are the boyhood and apprenticeship scenes, with Edmund Gwenn as the kindly old Leghorn merchant easily dominating the picture; the slave-trading period with Anthony's degeneration; the Alpine coach tragedy; and the Napoleonic ball and opera.

—P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

GIRLS' DORMITORY. (Irving Cummings—20th Century-Fox.)

Herbert Marshall, Simone Simon, Ruth Chatterton.

This is not a *Maedchen in Uniform*, but it's a very pretty and fragile sketch of a girls' school in Switzerland and how one young lady, just two days before she is to graduate, is discovered to be in love with the headmaster. The whole thing, the quality of youth all over the place, the Herbert Marshall performance as the master, Ruth Chatterton's presentation of the instructress who also has an eye on her superior, the adult note of Constance Collier and J. Edward Bromberg, and a newcomer, Simone Simon, as the girl, all shape into something unusually nice. Aside from some dangerous tangling up of things toward the end, it's a smooth and polished and touching affair. —John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

SING, BABY, SING. (Sidney Lanfield—20th Century-Fox.)

Adolphe Menjou, Alice Faye, Gregory Ratoff.

Twentieth Century-Fox, with delightful impudence and its tongue in its cheek, insists that "any similarity with actual persons is not intentional, but purely coincidental." Well, well! Of course, coincidence always has been a favourite plot device, so it may be sheer accident that Adolphe Menjou finds himself in the rôle of a temperamental and tippling Hollywood star who comes to New York on a vacation, develops a Romeo fixation, implores a night-club singer to be his Juliet, and finally—in the cold sober morn—flees across the continent with his Juliet in hot pursuit. This being a nonsensical situation although no more ridiculous than the real-life incident on which it was not (let us remind you) based, Darryl Zanuck's nimble company has developed it with keen relish for its absurdities and has entrusted its performance to a group of assorted comedians, clowns and madcaps. The Romeo and Juliet theme provides the picture's merriest moments and permits us, once again, to enjoy Mr. Menjou in a comedy rôle.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

"Anthony Adverse"

CONTINENTAL FILMS

SAVOY HOTEL 217. (Gustave Ucicky—German.) Hans Albers, Brigitte Horney, Gusti Hüber.

Savoy Hotel 217, directed by Gustave Ucicky (who made that excellent melodrama of the submarine war, *Morgenrot*), and photographed by Fritz Lang's old cameraman, takes us agreeably back to the old classical Ufa days of *Dr. Mabuse* and *The Spy*. A philandering waiter (Hans Albers), an old-fashioned vamp who meets a violent and unexpected end, a lover from Siberia, a little chambermaid and a jealous housekeeper: the fates of all these are agreeably crossed in a slow, good-humoured murder story set in pre-War St. Petersburg. Love on the servants' twisting iron stairway, jealousy round the linen cupboard; the melodramatic passions are given a pleasantly realistic setting by a very competent director and a first-class cameraman.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

MARIA BASHKIRTSEFF. (Hermann Kosterlitz —Austrian.)

Lili Darvas, Hans Jaray.

Mr. Hans Jaray, a nice young man with a rather vague screen personality, appears here as Guy de Maupassant, who was also, it seems, a nice young man, but vague. The film traces his short love affair with Maria Bashkirtseff, a young Russian painter dying of consumption in Paris, with considerable charm though rather temperate passion. Both Mr. Jaray and Miss Darvas, as Maupassant and his Maria, perform with modesty in parts that other actors might have invested with major emotion. The smaller parts are finely done, the lighting sensitive and rather exquisite. *Maria Bashkirtseff* is a period piece for connoisseurs, elegant, brittle, and delicately appointed, a bloodless but decorative *objet d'art*.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

LA KERMESSE HEROIQUE. (Jacques Feyder—French.)

Françoise Rosay, Alerme, Jean Murat, Louis Jouvet, Micheline Cheirel.

Jacques Feyder and a completely heroic cast have worked comic marvels with the story. The place is Boom, a Belgian village, and the time is 1616, after Philip of Spain has conquered Flanders. An insolent courier brings word that a battalion, led by their noble Duke, will spend the night in Boom. The Flemish burghers are panic-stricken; there will be murder, arson, the rack and dishonour to their women. So the Burgomaster conceives a stratagem: he will pretend he is newly deceased, Boom will go into mourning, the men-folk into hiding and the Spaniards will go their way in peace. But the women of Boom decide otherwise. Their husbands out of sight, they welcome the Duke and his men with true Flemish—or would it be Gallic?—hospitality and the invaders are cheered as they resume their journey. A delightfully satirical libel on the city of Boom and its masculine inhabitants, the film has achieved a delicate balance between broad farce and subtle humour which makes it one of the most refreshing and witty pictures of the year. Technically it is equal, if not superior, to anything Hollywood turned out this season.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

SINGENDE JUGEND, featuring the Vienna Choirboys. Direction: Max Neufeld. Photography: Hans Theyer. Austrian.

Films with music may be divided into three categories: The category in which music serves the plot, *e.g.* emotional dramas wherein the breaking of a heart elicits a shriek of violins from an invisible orchestra. The category in which the plot serves the music, *e.g.* the Grace Moore films. The category in which the story, the visual appeal, is fundamentally allied to the music, in which sight and sound reciprocate their respective advantages, *e.g. The Robber Symphony*, and, to some extent, the René Clair films. The second class is obviously not very important cinematically, consisting as it does mainly of screened opera performances. With imagination, this type of film could be made more significant. The spirit of the music could be expressed in visual images having an emotional and rhythmical relationship to it. Eisenstein made an interesting effort in this field some years ago. (But, it will be noticed, when this is done the film moves into the third category.)

As it is, the story of such films is usually insignificant in itself, and exists only as a thread on which the music may be hung. The story of *Singende Jugend* is a little better than are most of this type of story. There is a little homely comedy and pathos in the relationship between the street singer and the child, and in the jealous love this motherless boy conceives for the pretty matron of the choir by which he is adopted. There is an attempt, reminiscent of *Maedchen in Uniform*, to show his tortured mind when he is unjustly accused of stealing. The film keeps moving in the musical scenes, and the camera's accompaniment of the boys, as they march or ride up the Austrian mountains, was stirring. Altogether, an unpretentious and pleasant little film. —Henry Adler

GOLGOTHA, the film made by Duvivier, of the New Testament story of the Passion and Crucifixion, first shown in Paris eighteen months ago, has gone to America for the largest sum yet realised by a French film. In all probability London audiences will have an opportunity of seeing it after Christmas at the Curzon. It is now up for consideration by the L.C.C.

The film created a stir, as trade publicity invariably puts it, but this soon gathered momentum and became a wave of fat box-office receipts. The Cardinal Verier saw it privately and approved, Paris then gave it a six-weeks' run, and it is now successfully showing in the provinces.

Its history is a curious mixture. Promoted by one of the great French Banks, it cost something very near twelve and a half million francs. Its director had made *Poil de Carotte*, *La Bandera*, *Maria Chapdelaine* (Grand Prix du Cinema) and other films: many of the exteriors were constructed outside Algiers and for three months the walls of the Temple stood in all weathers while Arabs and the Nomad tribes of the south came four thousand strong to represent the turbulent crowds at Jerusalem nineteen hundred years ago.

The scenario is straightforward, commencing with the pilgrims on their way to the Passover, and showing the difficult political situation between the Sanhedrin and Pontius Pilate, the Last Supper, the trial and execution of Christ, to end with the disciples going out to spread the gospel in many lands. The part of Jesus is played by Robert le Vignon, that of Herod by Harry Baur, with Jean Gabin as Pilate.

The interest of the film goes further than the treatment of its religious theme or its reconstruction of history. It shows, behind careful directing and scenario, an unfailing calculation of the reaction of widely different audiences.

—P. Hutchins

"Golgotha"

REAL PEOPLE CAN'T BE WRONG

WHAT stirs in the dim pool of B.B.C. listeners? Who listens to what? How gauge the interest of the many millioned man in the street?

Is this voice of the great outside world a presence only, like a cathedral, not to be thought about? Mr. Symons, fisherman of Cornwall, advances this not so fantastic theory.

Researchers in fly fishing, faced with an identical problem, built a tank with a window in the bottom, cast their flies on the surface, and examined them from below. It took the anglers three thousand years to think of taking the fishes' point of view. The B.B.C. has every chance of beating that record.

Here is Bermondsey talking, typical of the working, struggling proletariat of South-side London. Here is Mousehole, a romantic village in a coign of the cliffs of Cornwall, but as ardently devoted to radio. The only competition is the conversation of the "Ship" and the roar of the sea, for the nearest picture-house is at Penzance.

The B.B.C. should consider this aquarium method of research borrowed from the fly-fishers. When Val Gielgud's *cri de cœur* goes over the air asking for comment and brings in seven bags of mail, is it evidence or only sycophantic nonsense? Why not a host of B.B.C. contact men, talking in pubs, dropping in on washing days, getting to know—in the vernacular?

It must be difficult, for the B.B.C. Questionnaires are notoriously misleading. The answers are mostly snob answers. Newspaper critics reflect only the small talk of the cocktail bars and the exhibitionism of letters to the editor.

More difficult still is the fact that people, however vociferous, lacking the power of self-understanding, may not know what they really want.

To discover what the public wants is indeed a matter of interpretation and an art. But no art was ever made except it was based on the living reality.

Here are a few aspects of that reality. Cabined and confined in Portland Place, choked by the fumes of class conversation, the B.B.C. is invited to take a walk.

The language of the people is more luscious than print will convey, though the camera catches a trifle of it. But real people, if properly interpreted, can't be wrong.

BERMONDSEY

MRS. PARKSHURST. Housewife.

Regards radio primarily as accompaniment to housework, but listens carefully to political talks, News and Variety. Considered *Mutiny on the Bounty* good radio drama. Listens to Luxembourg on Sunday, but not in favour of sponsored broadcasting.

MR. DYER. Partner in a wireless supply and service firm.

"The B.B.C. give us large quantities of almost unbelievably dull music. If they replaced it by more interesting programmes, then neither highbrow nor lowbrow would turn to foreign stations."

ALICE WRIGHT and FREDA MITCHELL. Schoolgirls, aged 13.

Like Children's Hour, News, Variety and thriller plays. Favourite stars: Jack Hylton, Jack Payne, Jane Carr, Gracie Fields, Tommy Handley. Listen regularly to Schools Talks at home, but school not equipped with wireless.

MR. ADAMS. Window cleaner.

Four favourites: 1, News; 2, Cinema organ; 3, Tommy Handley; 4, Gypsy orchestras. Three complaints: 1, Good programmes overlap on different wavelengths; 2, Talks uninteresting; 3, Sunday programmes dull.

A DOCKER.

"Too many dull talks like bee-keeping and gardening. I have neither bees nor garden. The working man wants entertainment, especially on Sunday. The Sunday programmes are bunk."

MR. DANCE and MR. EDWARDS. Workers in an electric supply company.

B.B.C. gives good service on football results. Consider evening programmes should be more sharply contrasted between "heavy" and "light."

IRENE DIBLEY and LILY COOPER. Workers in a diary factory.

Listen to Luxembourg on Sunday. Consider B.B.C. talks dull, but dance band list good. Geraldo and Charlie Kunz run best bands.

IRENE JACKSON. Schoolgirl, aged 12.

Likes Children's Hour and Henry Hall. Listens regularly to News and Drama. Remembers particularly the launching of the *Queen Mary*, *The Ghost Train* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

MR. MILLS. Lorry driver.

B.B.C. Variety good. Considers sponsored broadcasting in this country would stimulate British trade.

MOUSEHOLE (Cornwall)

T. SYMONS. Retired fisherman and veteran of the Klondyke Rush.

"I listen to everything, but I never think much about it."

MRS. GARTRELL. Fisherman's wife.

Likes light music as background to her work. Considers *In Town Tonight* the best B.B.C. programme. Weather forecast always received in her house.

JOE SLEEMAN. Fisherman.

"I have to get Ireland for racing tips. I only listen to English programmes when there's nothing else to do." But listens regularly to weather forecast and News.

MR. ASH. Baker.

Favourite programme: Service from St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. Likes light music and jazz, but considers Henry Hall affected. His family prefer foreign stations.

TOMMY WATERS. Schoolboy, aged 7.

Favourite programme: The Ovaltinies (Luxembourg) B.B.C. poetry readings remind him too much of school. Dislikes B.B.C. announcers' microphone manner.

MRS. J. PENDER. Fisherman's wife.

Likes *In Town Tonight*. Listens to political talks and to John Hilton, but prefers to read the women's talks. Always listens to weather forecast.

THE first and biggest job before the B.B.C. Public Relations experts in their coming national survey is the collecting of opinion. They need have no fear in this task. Our investigation reveals that both in London and Land's End there is no lack of public opinion on the subject of broadcasting, and no reticence in expressing it. In measuring the national demand the B.B.C. investigators may rely on frank and sincere answers to their questions.

On the programmes side, our enquiry reveals certain basic likes and dislikes. Both Bermondsey and Mousehole agree that the News Department does a good job and does it well. Mousehole, a fishing village, pays further tribute to the weather forecast service, and it may be safely assumed that the other services such as market prices and shipping forecasts are equally appreciated by the communities concerned.

On the whole range of Talks, with the possible exception of politics, Mousehole is strangely silent. But Bermondsey vouchsafes an opinion, and that opinion is clearly negative. Whether presentation, subjects or speakers are the reason, it is evident that our witnesses in at least one London working-class district have little use for the efforts of the Talks Department.

On one point Bermondsey is adamant. Variety is an essential accompaniment to leisure. And if the B.B.C. does not give enough variety, then Bermondsey turns to Luxembourg. Mousehole likewise is no hater of sponsored broadcasting, and opinion here was constantly expressed that Radio Normandie was far more easily picked up than the British Regionals. This poses an important problem for engineers and programme builders alike.

Behind these broad agreements lies a complex mass of desires, preferences, needs. What they are and what their value may be are matters for continuous and sympathetic research.

B.B.C. EVENTS

Sunday, Nov. 1st, 4.30 p.m.: *Toyohiko Kagawa.* A dramatic biography. (Producer, Sievking.) REGIONAL. 7.0 p.m.: Feature programme, *Coronel and Falkland Islands.* (Producer, Cheatle.) NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Nov. 3rd. REGIONAL. 8.0 p.m.: ★*Laburnum Grove*, by Priestley. (Producer, Sieveking.) REGIONAL.

Thursday, Nov. 5th, 9.30 p.m.: Feature programme, *Gunpowder Treason.* (Whitaker Wilson.) REGIONAL.

Friday, Nov. 6th. 2.30 p.m.: Feature programme, for schools, *Coal.* NATIONAL. 8.30 p.m.: Relay from Covent Garden. *Ariadne-au Naxos*, by R. Strauss. Dresden State Opera Co. REGIONAL.

Saturday, Nov. 7th, 7.30 p.m.: *In Town Tonight.* (Producer, Hanson.) NATIONAL.

Monday, Nov. 9th. ★9.35 p.m.: Light heavyweight championship of the world. Lewis *v.* Harvey. From Wembley. REGIONAL.

Tuesday, Nov. 10th: ★9.40 p.m.: *The March of the '45*, a radio panorama from Edinburgh and Manchester, by D. G. Bridson. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Nov. 11th, 9.10 p.m.: Armistice Day programme. (Producer, Gielgud.) NATIONAL.

Friday, Nov. 13th: ★9.45 p.m.: From Covent Garden. *Don Giovanni*, Act II. Dresden State Opera Co. NATIONAL.

Sunday, Nov. 15th. ★5.35 p.m.: Shakespeare's *King Lear.* (Producer, Creswell.) NATIONAL.

Monday, Nov. 16th, 7.30 p.m.: *L'Aiglon.* (Producer, Barbara Burnham.) REGIONAL. 9.35 p.m.: Feature programme, "Manor to Mine," *Contemporary Contrasts in Village Life.* (Robin Whitworth.) NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Nov. 18th, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall concert. (No. 3.) Brahms. Elgar. NATIONAL. 9.30 p.m.: Boxing. Foord (S. Africa) *v.* Neusel (Germany). REGIONAL.

Thursday, Nov. 19th, 7.55 p.m.: *Madame Butterfly*, Act I, from Sadler's Wells. REGIONAL.

★Friday, Nov. 20th, 3.35 p.m.: Talk for Sixth Forms. T. S. Eliot. NATIONAL. 8.10 p.m.: Feature programme, *History of the G.P.O.* (Producer, Felton.) NATIONAL.

Sunday, Nov. 22nd, 5.20 p.m.: Feature programme, *St. Cecilia's Day.* NATIONAL. 9.5 p.m.: *The Importance of Being Earnest.* Wilde. (Producer, Gielgud.) NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Nov. 24th, 8.0 p.m.: *Opium Eater.* The story of De Quincey. (Producer, Felton.) REGIONAL. 9.45 p.m.: *The Fair of Sorochintsky*, Act I. From Covent Garden. NATIONAL.

★Wednesday, Nov. 25th, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert (No. 4.). Berlioz. Beethoven. Debussy. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Nov. 26th, 9.40 p.m.: Feature programme. *Night Shift from the Tower Bridge.* NATIONAL.

Friday, Nov. 27th, 9.40 p.m.: *L'Enfant Prodigue.* Debussy. From Birmingham. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Nov. 28th, 2.30 p.m.: *La Boheme*, Act I. From Sadler's Wells. REGIONAL.

Monday, Nov. 30th, 7.55 p.m.: *Pickwick*, Act I. Albert Coates. From Covent Garden. REGIONAL.

WHOSE MONEY MAKES MOVIES?

Two thousand million dollars: this is the staggering sum invested in the American Film Industry. Who are the men behind this vast wealth? Who controls the weekly entertainment of 85 million people from the secret places of high finance? How came this mighty power under their control?

Eight giant companies dominate production, distribution and exhibition throughout America. How did these giants originate? Who shaped them? How did they rise to their present strength?

These are some of the questions this Film Council analysis answers.

American film finance must be seen as a historical development. If we are to understand the mergers, the bankruptcies, the ruthless struggles which have led to the present day, we must go back forty years to the time when Edison was perfecting his first motion-picture equipment.

THE FIRST PHASE, 1908-12

The period lasting approximately from 1896 to 1908 constitutes the pre-history of the American movie industry. It was an era of primæval chaos, marked by the mushroom-growth of "nickelodeons" in all parts of the country and by the frantic efforts of the Edison interests to protect, and of all other production groups to pirate, the basic camera and projector patents controlled by the former.

The history of American film finance opened with the formation of the Motion Picture Patents Company in January, 1909. That company, sponsored by George Kleine, the leading importer of foreign films and equipment, was a combine of the nine most important manufacturers then existing, including the Edison, Vitagraph and Biograph companies, and of the Kleine firm. All these enterprises agreed to pool their numerous patent rights (most of them having made important additions to the original Edison patents) and to acknowledge the priority of the basic Edison rights, paying royalities for their use. Licences for all these patents were issued to the members of the combine, but were strictly withheld from all other producers and equipment manufacturers. By forming the General Film Company (the first national distributing organisation in the country) during the following year, this powerful monopoly rapidly obtained complete control of the distribution sphere, absorbing 57 out of the 58 film "exchanges" then existing. In addition the company attempted to enforce the complete exclusion of all films except their own from the American screens. They issued licences, against a weekly two-dollar fee, for the use of their projectors to all cinemas and threatened to prosecute under the patent laws any exhibitor who used the company's projectors to display films made by outsiders. Finally, the trust made a contract with the Eastman Kodak Company according to which the latter agreed to supply film base only to the firms who were members of the pool. (Fears of an anti-trust prosecution, however, led to the abandonment of this arrangement in 1911.)

The trust immediately standardised the whole business of producing and distributing films by confining themselves exclusively to the production of the one or two reel shorts in vogue when the merger was formed and by charging uniform rentals for standard programmes composed of such films. The stranglehold of this monopoly, protected by the patent laws and paying tribute to the electrical industry, thus appeared complete. The astonishing history of its breakdown provides one of the most instructive chapters in the story of modern finance.

Almost all the leading figures who made the industry what it is to-day started as independents in opposition to the combines.

Foremost among the exhibitors fighting the trust was W. Fox. The methods adopted by the combine to oust him are characteristic of the manner in which the struggle was conducted. One of Fox's projectionists was bribed by the trust men to take the films rented for exhibition from them nightly after the show to a house of prostitution in Hoboken. Shortly afterwards Fox's licence was cancelled on the grounds that he had allowed the companies' films to be used for immoral purposes.

Fox was able, however, to defeat this ruse, and his lead in bringing an action for damages against the trust under the Sherman laws was followed by innumerable other exhibitors. At the same time the combine was unable to suppress the continued pirating of its patent rights by independent producers, whose activities were largely responsible for the selection of Los Angeles as the ultimate centre of the movie industry. This city being within easy reach of the Mexican border, it was a simple matter for the pirates to escape with their cameras to safety on the approach of the process servers and thugs hired by the enraged patent owners to smash up their equipment.

The overwhelming success of the feature film and star system experiments initiated by the independents in opposition to the shorts of the trust, and the actions brought by the exhibitors, had already undermined the monopoly hold of the combine by about 1912. It received its final blow when the General Film Company was dissolved by court order in 1915 and when the Supreme Court declared in 1917 that the purchaser of a patented projector could not be legally forced to exhibit only the manufacturer's own films.

The first film combine thus collapsed in spite of its apparently unassailable strength, because it attempted to stabilise a new and entirely unprecedented form of mass entertainment at a time when the demand for that entertainment had only just been aroused. Lacking the great advantage of their opponents, who were not only of the people but also in continuous contact with the people, the executives of the combine failed to realise that mass tastes were changing too quickly for ordinary rationalisation practices. They soon lagged behind the rapidly expanding requirements of their audiences, and in so doing opened the field to their opponents.

THE EIGHT MAJOR COMPANIES CONTROL:

80% of the capital invested in production;
65% of feature film output as measured by No. of films;
80% measured by cost of films;
100% of the news film services;

8 out of 11 National Distributing Organisations.

12% of the total number of theatres;
25% of the most desirable seating capacity;
100% of the First Run theatres; many of the best second run theatres.

THE SECOND PHASE, 1912-29

From the organisational point of view this phase saw the gradual consolidation, after incessant and bitter rivalry, of the eight major companies which dominate the industry to-day. These companies survived because they succeeded in breaking through the original isolation of the three distinct branches of the industry. As producers they secured a sufficiently widespread exhibition outlet for their films through the control of cinema circuits. As exhibitors and distributors they assured themselves of steady supplies at remunerative rentals by absorbing production units.

The Paramount organisation is the outstanding example of the former group. The reverse process is illustrated by the development of Loew, Fox, and especially by that of First National Distributors, who commenced as a defensive alliance of leading exhibitors against the encroachments of Paramount. Having established a country-wide distributing organisation, *F.N.* contracted with independent producers for a supply of feature films, and later established studios of their own. During 1919-21 the organisation embraced some 3,400 theatres in all parts of the country and also seriously threatened Paramount's production position. Zukor, at Paramount, was, however, able to meet this attack by a ruthless cinema acquisition campaign and by production on a De Mille scale.

He succeeded in acquiring controlling interests in the circuits of several of the First National shareholders themselves and was thus able to work against his rivals from within their own ranks.

First National received their greatest blow with the absorption by Paramount of the largest remaining circuit, the Katz-Balaban group. A few years later they lost their independence by the absorption of their last stronghold, the Stanley group, by Warner Bros. (1929).

This latter move placed Warner Bros. among the leading companies in the industry. Their position had for a long time been precarious until with Fox they acted as pioneers in the introduction of sound from 1925-6 onwards. Even after the overwhelming success of their first full-length sound films they however were seriously hampered by lack of exhibition facilities, until the position was remedied by their control of First National.

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

J. CHEEVER COWDIN

A. H. GIANNINI

J. P. MORGAN

Among the other companies Universal and Columbia rose to second-rank importance by a careful production policy and by abstaining from too extravagant theatre acquisitions.

From the financial point of view this phase is marked by the entry of Wall Street into the movie world. The policy of financing film enterprises from their own profits, which had sufficed for the earlier stages of the industry's development, proved inadequate in face of the vast new capital demands arising from the costly star-feature films and the theatre acquisition campaigns of the post-war years.

The Famous Players-Lasky group (Paramount) were the first to enlist the support of a Wall Street banking firm, and until their last reorganisation Kuhn, Loeb & Co. acted as their main banking affiliation. Within a few years Loew, Pathé and Fox shares were listed on the New York stock exchange, and by 1924 the securities of many movie corporations were handled by Wall Street bankers. Other financial groups lined up with the film industry during this phase included:—

Hasley, Stuart and Co.: Fox,
Hayden, Stone and Co.: First National,
Goldman, Sachs and Co.: Warner,
M. H. Flint (Los Angeles): Warner, etc.,
S. W. Straus and Co.: Universal, Roxy, etc.,
John F. Dryden—Prudential Life Insurance: Fox,
Dillon, Read and Co.: Loew,
Shields and Co.: Universal,
A. H. Giannini: J. Schenck, W. G. McAdoo,
J. Millbank (Allied to Chase National Bank, Blair and Co., etc.): W. W. Hodgkinson,
F. J. Godsol (Allied to Dupont family): Samuel Goldwyn,
W. R. Hearst: News and Feature film units at various times associated with M.G.M., Fox, and Universal.

We can summarise the financial developments of the 1912-29 phase as follows: After an initial move towards decentralisation, when the industry emerged from the clutches of the Patents Trust, the foundations were laid for its concentration on a very much higher plane. After releasing the undreamed-of possibilities for the development of the film as a popular form of entertainment, the eight major companies slowly emerged as powerful groups controlling the most important positions in all the three spheres of the industry and intimately linked with prominent Wall Street banking interests. It is important to note, moreover, that towards the end of this period all the pioneer film executives, except W. Fox and C. Laemmle, had allowed the financial control of their enterprises to slip out of their hands into those of their backers. As yet, however, the latter, in the main, represented the leading investment and merchant banking houses, and did not include, except indirectly, the peak figures in the American financial oligarchy.

THE THIRD PHASE, SINCE 1929

The third and present phase of American film finance was heralded by two events of the first magnitude. It opened with the coming of sound, a technical revolution that not merely transformed the whole nature of film production, but also proved to have so unexpectedly stimulating an effect on the box office that for a considerable time it was able to delay the impact of the crisis (then in its first violent phase) on the film industry. The second event was the crisis itself, which was rendered so much the more devastating when at last it did hit the movies, by the enormous cost involved in scrapping perfectly good equipment and product and replacing it by even more expensive sound installations.

In their joint effects these two sets of events revolutionised the financial, no less than the technical, basis of the American movie industry. The adoption of sound led to the emergence—after violent struggles, as we shall presently see—of a new patents monopoly very nearly as complete in fact, if not in form, as the old patents trust of the pre-war years. At the same time the financial results of the crisis led to a transformation in the sphere of direct stock and banking control that reinforced the hold over the industry of the powers behind the new patents groups.

The problem of movie control to-day is therefore a double one: (1) the power of indirect control over the industry through monopoly of essential equipment; (2) direct financial control over the eight major companies through majority holdings of voting stock or monopoly of executive key-positions.

The key to the former problem (chart 1) is provided by the control of the most important American patents in the sound equipment field by Western Electric Co. (subsidiary of the American Telephone and Telegraph Co.) and R.C.A. Photophone (a subsidiary of the Radio Corporation of America). The former group of concerns is almost wholly Morgan controlled, while in the latter the Rockefeller interests appear at the present time to be as strong as, if not stronger than, those of the Morgan group.

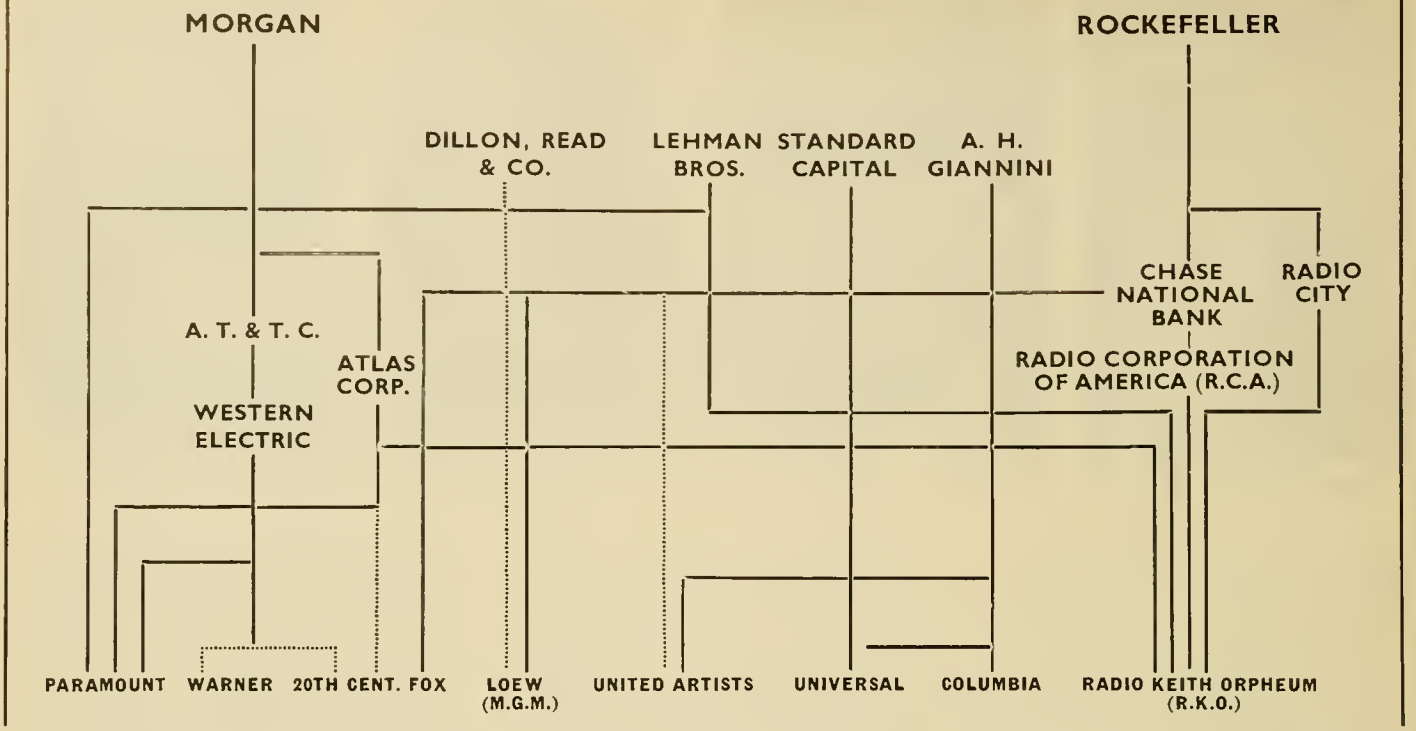
Since 1930 this American monopoly has been extended into a world monopoly by an agreement between the American groups and the most important German patentees, A.E.G., Siemens-Halske and Klangfilm.

The cash value of this monopoly is measured by the licence fee of 500 dollars *per reel* charged until recently by Electrical Research Products Inc. (the sound equipment subsidiary of Western Electric known in the trade as Erpi) for all films produced on the Western Electric system. The net revenues obtained by this concern from the sale and licensing of sound equipment during eight years (including the early phase when sound was not yet generally adopted) amounted to 20,900,000 dollars.

The establishment of this monopoly was not achieved without violent opposition involving prolonged litigation. Both Warners and Fox had done a considerable amount of pioneer work before the telephone and radio interests decided to enter the sound film sphere on a large scale. In the case of Warner Bros. a long law suit between that company on behalf of the Vitaphone Corp. and Erpi was settled in 1935 with the payment by Erpi of back royalties on sound equipment and its release from further royalty obligations.

The struggle with Fox was even more dramatic. It involved not merely the personal ownership by William Fox of the American Tri-Ergon patents (the patents used in the continental Klangfilm system), but also his retention, up to the period under discussion, of personal control over his film companies. Litigation concerning the Tri-Ergon rights was not settled until 1935, when the Supreme Court annulled Fox's patents, reversing the findings of all the lower courts by its decision. While there was still a possibility that W. Fox's Tri-Ergon claims might be corroborated, the vast market represented by the Fox companies might, however, be conquered for the Western Electric interests, if Fox were removed from their control.

DIRECT FINANCIAL CONTROL OR BACKING, 1936



This was the objective of the bitter struggle fought out by the telephone group and the Fox bankers, Halsey, Stuart & Co. on the one hand, and Fox on the other, between October, 1929, and April, 1930. At the commencement of this period the Fox companies were at the height of their prosperity, earning a net income of 17,000,000 dollars per year. Fox had embarked on three vast expansion schemes: the purchase of an important theatre circuit (the Poli group), the acquisition of the controlling interest in Loew's Inc., and of 49½ per cent voting stock in the holding company controlling Gaumont-British. In order to finance these deals Fox had obtained a 15,000,000 dollar loan from the telephone group and others, together with about the same figure from his bankers. These short-term loans were to be repaid in the ordinary course of business by new stock issues. To his surprise Fox discovered that the price demanded by his banking and telephone friends for this normal service was the abandonment on his part of control over his companies. Efforts to find alternative financial backing, although for a time apparently successful, proved fruitless in the end. Fox found himself face to face with a banking ring determined to wrest control from his hands, and powerful enough to buy off even those bankers who at first were prepared to support him. After a long legal battle in which the telephone group attempted to throw the Fox concerns into receivership, and which was further complicated by the filing of an anti-trust action against Fox on account of the Fox-Loew merger, the matter was finally settled by a victory of the telephone-banking ring. W. Fox sold out his voting stock for 18,000,000 dollars to a business friend of the Halsey, Stuart firm, H. L. Clarke, a Chicago utilities magnate associated with the Insulls. Remaining for a short time on the board of his former concerns, Fox offered the free use of his Tri-Ergon sound patents to these companies, but their new controllers preferred to enter into a licensing arrangement with the Western Electric interests at a cost to their shareholders of approximately 1,000,000 dollars per year.

This part of the struggle between Fox and the telephone interests serves to illustrate the close relationship which exists between indirect control by patents and direct control through voting stock and management. But it must be stressed that control is not always identical with ownership. The Fox case again provides a pertinent example. Prior to the change we have described, control of these companies was vested exclusively in 5 per cent of the total capital, which alone carried voting rights. After the change the situation was even more curious, for the Fox companies, then affiliated as subsidiaries to Clarke's General Theatres Equipment Inc., were controlled by three voting trustees, each owning only one share of stock. *The confirmed value of these shares in* 1931 *was a little over one dollar.*

The present direct control of the eight major companies emerges as follows (chart 2):

PARAMOUNT: all the Paramount interests were merged in 1930 in a new company known as the Paramount Publix Corp., which continued the expansion operations of the group on a large scale. It acquired a controlling interest in the Columbia Broadcasting system, and established a production unit in France. In 1933 this company was thrown first into receivership and later into bankruptcy. It was reorganised in June, 1935, as Paramount Pictures Inc., control passing from Kuhn, Loeb & Co. to a group consisting of the Wall Street investment bankers, Lehman Bros., and the Atlas Corporation, an investment trust within the Morgan sphere of interest. It appears that the Morgan telephone trust also acquired a direct interest in the company, and their influence was further strengthened by the appointment of J. E. Otterson, former chief of Erpi and prime mover in the struggle with Fox, to the controlling position of president of the new company.

Commenting on this change, Representative A. J. Sabath, Chairman of the Congressional Committee investigating real estate bond reorganisation, stated: "The reorganisation of the Paramount Publix Corporation, now Paramount Pictures Inc., was marked by 'collusion, fraud and conspiracy.' This is a case where control of the company was grabbed by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and other interests" (*New York Times*, 11th October, 1935). From the report into the company's affairs presented by J. P. Kennedy in June this year but not made public until recently, it appears, however, that the new management did not materially improve the standards of efficiency of its predecessors. In the first place it appears that after a preliminary survey Mr. Kennedy considered it a waste of time and money to continue his inquiry, unless far-reaching changes in the management of the company were effected. "At the time," he states, "when any well-managed picture business should be making substantial profits, Paramount is not making money and, as now managed, gives no hope of doing so. While current unsatisfactory results are cumulative effects of a chain of incompetent, unbusinesslike and wasteful practices to be detected in every phase of production, this pervading incompetence is directly traceable to a lack of confidence in the management and direction of the company's affairs in the New York office." (*Time*, 27th July, 1936.)

One of the results of this report appears to have been a charge in the presidency from J. E. Otterson to the well-known showman, B. Balaban. It would be a mistake, however, to conclude from such organisational changes that the dominant Morgan control of the company had been basically modified.

WARNER BROS. The present financial control of this concern is difficult to determine. The former banking affiliations (Goldman, Sachs &

Co. and Hayden Stone & Co.) appear to have been dropped, and it is reported that Western Electric have an interest, though probably not a controlling one, in the firm, which is also related to some extent with W. R. Hearst. In 1932 none of the Warner board members represented the giant interests (Morgan, Rockefeller, Mellon), but the Guaranty Trust Co., the Manufacturers' Trust Co., and the New York Trust Co. (New York banks then within the Morgan sphere of influence) were tied up with Warner's as transfer agents and as trustees and interest agents for bond issues.

TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX. Shortly after the events we have described, Clarke's General Theatres Equipments Inc. went into receivership. Fox Film (the producing section of the Fox enterprises) escaped receivership and was merged in 1935 with J. Schenck's Twentieth Century Corporation. The Chase National Bank, which had backed Clarke, retained the largest block of stock and probably the control of the company. This bank is now a Rockefeller concern. Its president, W. W. Aldrich, is a brother-in-law of John D. Rockefeller, Junr., and the Rockefeller family have a substantial stock interest in it.

Morgan interests in Twentieth Century-Fox are represented by a minority holding of the Atlas Corporation.

LOEW'S INC. In spite of the nominal separation from Fox, Loew's, whose chief executive is Nicholas Schenck, is also in the Chase National-Rockefeller sphere of interest. The close link between Loew and Fox is also emphasised by their collaboration in the recent bid for control of Gaumont-British.

UNITED ARTISTS. In July this year the banker A. H. Giannini was elected chairman and president of the corporation. Twentieth Century-Fox (and therefore, indirectly, the Rockefeller interests) have a 50 per cent stock holding in United Artists Studios Inc., and J. Schenck has retained his presidency of United Artists Theatres of California Inc.

UNIVERSAL. In April, 1936, the Universal Corporation, a new holding company, acquired control of the Universal organisation through the purchase of common stock from Carl Laemmle. All the stock is held in a 10-year voting trust, of which the California banker, A. H. Giannini, the president of Standard Captial, J. C. Cowdin, and the English miller, J. A. Rank, are prominent members. Mr. Cowdin is also chairman of Transcontinental Air Transport Inc., and director of California Packing Corp., Curtiss-Wright Corp., Cheever Corp., Douglas Aircraft Corp., Whitehall Securities Co., Ltd., Sperry Gyroscope Co., Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Co., Ford Instrument Co., Intercontinent Aviation Inc., Sperry Corp., and Waterbury Tool Co.

R.K.O. Organised in 1928 as a subsidiary of the Radio Corporation of America, R.K.O. is the third of the great film companies falling into receivership during the recent crisis. In October, 1935, R.C.A. sold half its interest in R.K.O. to the Atlas Corporation and Lehman Bros., who also took an option for the purchase of the remainder. But it appears that the Rockefeller interest remains predominant in R.K.O. through direct stock holdings in the name of Radio City, the great Rockefeller real-estate enterprise.

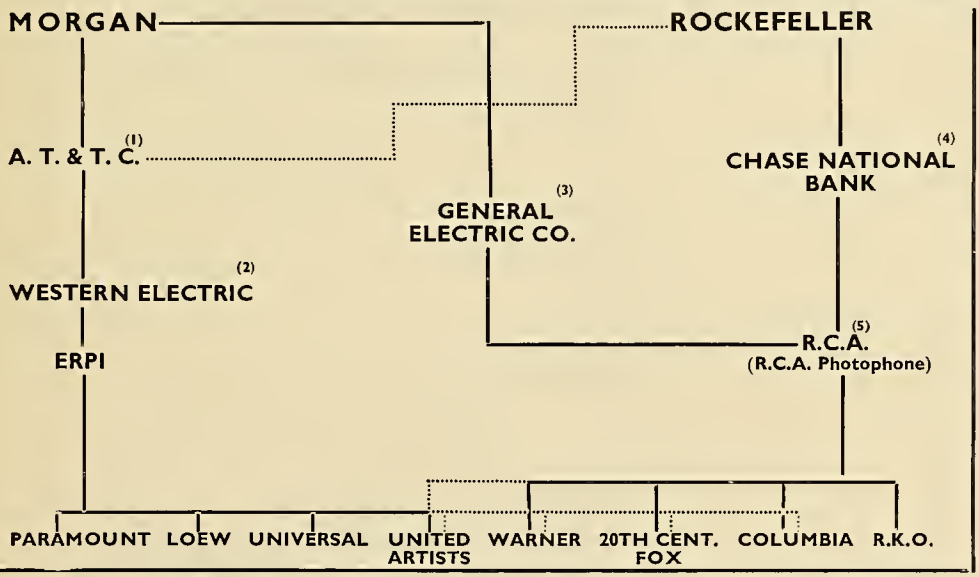
COLUMBIA. This company is controlled by a voting trust holding 96 per cent of the voting stock. The trust consists of A. H. Giannini, the San Francisco banker, and two of the company's founders, Harry and Jack Cohn.

* * * * * *

The story of American film finance has been a three-act story. The monopoly of the early years was swamped in meteoric expansion and violent competition. To-day monopoly has once again gripped the industry, and is holding it fast. The relentless forces behind its evolution have never once been basically deflected by an unceasing series of anti-trust prosecutions.

To-day, as in the early years, the cry is raised that big business, by wrenching control from the showmen, was ruining the industry; there were even hopes that a new move towards independent production might break the fetters of monopoly. But the movies are now America's fourth largest industry. They are too valuable for the mighty controlling groups to relinquish. Will the present organisation prove flexible enough to meet the rapid changes of public demand, or will monopoly discover, as in the pioneer days, that rationalisation may ultimately be defeated by social trends beyond its control?

INDIRECT DEPENDENCE THROUGH SOUND EQUIPMENT CONTROL



NOTES

This chart illustrates the indirect control over the film industry exercised by the leading financial groups through their sound patents monopoly.

The Morgan group (J. P. Morgan & Co., and Drexel & Co.) is the most powerful financial group in the U.S.A. to-day. Its power, built up through international and investment banking extends to every sphere of American economy. In January, 1932, Morgan partners were represented on some 35 banks and 60 non-financial corporations with assets totalling about $30 billion. Morgan influence is calculated to extend, directly or indirectly, to one quarter of the total corporate wealth of the U.S.A.

While the private wealth of the Rockefellers is even greater than that of the Morgans, their economic power, as expressed in the control of wealth, is not as great. Rockefeller power was built up on oil, though it now extends to many other spheres, including banking. Apart from their vast real estate holdings, Rockefeller interest appears to predominate in banks and other corporations with assets totalling about $21.5 billion.

1. American Telephone and Telegraph Co.: *This four and a quarter billion combine was organised by Morgan and is still under Morgan "management" control (the 20 largest stockholders own less than 5 per cent of its total stock). 14 of its 19 directors, including the president and vice-president, are more or less closely linked by cross-directorships to Morgan concerns, and a Morgan partner is a director of two important subsidiaries. Management links are reinforced by banking relations. A Rockefeller minority interest is represented on the board by W. W. Aldrich.*

2. Western Electric Co.: *Manufacturing subsidiary of A.T. & T.C. Markets sound film equipment through its subsidiary Electrical Research Products Inc. (ERPI). Western Electric equipment was until recently used under licence by all the major film companies except RKO.*

3. General Electric Co.: *Largest electrical manufacturers in the world. Organised by Morgan in 1892. Morgan still predominant, one Morgan partner and three other Morgan men on board.*

4. Chase National Bank: *Largest commercial bank in U.S.A. Controlled by John D. Rockefeller group since 1930. W. W. Aldrich, brother-in-law of J. D. Rockefeller Jr., is president, two other members of the inner Rockefeller "cabinet" are board members. Rockefeller family has also substantial stock holding.*

5. Radio Corporation of America: *Incorporated in 1919 by G.E.C. to take over control of Marconi Co., and patent rights of G.E.C., Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Co., A.T. & T.C. and other concerns, Radio patent monopoly enforced under licensing system until 1930, when government anti-trust action led to a certain relaxation of control. The same action induced G.E.C. and Westinghouse to distribute their dominant stock interests to their stockholders, which implied a certain relaxation, though not elimination of control. At the same time Rockefeller interest became prominent and is still represented on the board (B.Cutker of Chase National Bank). Sound film equipment is produced and marketed through R.C.A. Photophone Co., which recently added Warner, 20th Century-Fox and Columbia to R.K.O. as its licencees.*

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FEDERATION OF FILM GUILDS FOR THE LABOUR PARTY

There was, I regret to say, no direct connection between the Labour Party film scheme and the Maxwell-Ostrer deal.

It was merely a coincidence that immediately it became known that the Socialists were going into the film business, there should be apoplectic convulsions in the City and that the newspapers should put up the banners of the A.P.C.-G.B. counter-revolution.

A demmed pretty conceit, Sir Percy, to imagine the film magnates, remembering the tumbrils in *The Scarlet Pimpernel* and *The Tale of Two Cities*, shouting to their financial backers, "Close the ranks! They shall not pass!"

But, I am afraid, if any rumblings kept the film capitalists awake at night, they were due, not to the tumbrils, but to oysters—or auditors.

For the time is not yet, when the Socialist film movement can hope to challenge the United Front of the producers, the lawyers, the millers, the widows, the bankers and the insurance companies.

The trouble is that to run anti-capitalist films you need capital. . . .

And, having none, the Labour Party is going to capitalise its biggest asset—local loyalty and enthusiasm. Just as, in the early days of *The Citizen*, *The Herald*, *The Clarion* and *Forward*, the enthusiasts set out to build up their own newspapers, so, it is hoped, they will build up a powerful film organisation . . . with this difference, that the Labour Movement is much bigger and the going should be easier.

The Labour Film Committee has worked out a scheme which, if not pretentious is, at least, practicable.

It is based entirely on non-theatrical distribution. It is obvious that, in a crisis or an election, the City-controlled cinemas are not going to place their screens at the disposal of Socialist propagandists—on the contrary! Nor is the Censor, the Brahmin of high-caste, going to sanction the political "untouchables."

So that, if Socialist propaganda is to secure theatrical distribution, it will not be as Socialist propaganda.

Distribution, therefore, is a more urgent problem than production.

The Labour film scheme depends upon the Film Guild principle. It is proposed to set up under the sponsorship of divisional Labour Parties, or groups of local parties, as a start, Guilds which will equip themselves with 16 mm. sound-projectors.

As the movement grows, more and more separate parties will create Guilds and acquire projectors until eventually there should be 600 or more Guilds and projectors in the country. So, at an election, films could be used as a mass-attack in every constituency.

Winning votes may be important, but initiating and instructing people in what are the ideals, the practical policy and programme and the true objectives of Socialism are more so.

First, then, it is necessary to create a "social-conscience" and a reforming ideal in the potential voters. For that purpose there already exist the social films (as distinct from Socialist films) which the documentary film producers have pioneered.

There is enough of them to justify the immediate creation of Film Guilds, which will act as discussion groups, bringing not only Labour Party members, Trades Unionist, Co-operators, and social workers together, but attracting also the marginal or unconverted electors.

Once the machinery exists, there are two other types of films to be developed—the broad propaganda or instructional films explaining, illustrating and underlining the Socialist policy and the direct, electioneering films which will make vote-winning arguments visible.

On the production side, the Committee has various schemes in hand. It is a question of Ways and Means.

Maybe Mr. John Maxwell has another £1,250,000 to spare, and is prepared to come down, this time, on the side of the angels! Maybe . . .

RITCHIE CALDER

For Public Relations Officers—

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS, whose special section this is, will do well to watch the development of the educational film world. It means large audiences and, for many interests, valuable audiences.

The G.P.O. is working a half-million audience of children by road-show during the coming winter, and through its central library will reach one million more. Western Electric, by road-show, will reach another large audience. The Dominion Governments, Gas, Oil, Electricity and other industries are cultivating this special field of distribution. For long distance education it is, in many views, the most effective.

Entry to the educational field is conditioned, however, and strictly conditioned. Public relations officers must have something to give.

People on the right lines are Dunlops with their story of the progress of communications; Gas with its cookery demonstrations for older girls, and Cadbury with its account of raw products and production processes.

Especially important is the educational experts' emphasis on civics. P.R.O.s should try to grasp its significance. It will repay them, for it is the royal road to the schools. The experts maintain that there is a gap between school life and the community life, which they expect the film to bridge. *Tell the children about life in the factory and the town. Tell them simply about man and his work. Introduce them to the labour and the reach and the organisation of modern life.*

These are the demands, and they may soon be issuing from thirty thousand schools. Public relations departments must surely seize the opportunity—and the privilege.

WHITEHALL DEFAULTS

The press reception given to the *Nutrition* film was well deserved. The film, as Miss Lejeune describes it, is a first effort to turn the cinema into a mass orator and on a subject of national importance. The occasion is of greater interest than the film itself, and of special interest is the fact that the film was produced for the Gas, Light & Coke Company. Years ago in America the attitude of big business was summed up in the words of one of the Vanderbilts, "the public be damned." This attitude is still to be found in the scruffier corners of the film and other industries, but slowly the notion that service of the public is better business, has taken hold. The cultivation of public relations has become an essential complement of good salesmanship.

The Gas interests have shown imagination in associating their product with one of the great problems of our time. In helping to solve the problem of nutrition and promoting the public health they serve the public and serve themselves.

There are two curious omissions in the nutrition film. The film talks of a food policy for the nation, but the word is spoken by Sir John Orr and not by the Minister of Agriculture. It describes one of the principal issues before the Minister of Health, but there is no word from Sir Kingsley Wood. Is it possible that the business of national education is passing, by default, from the offices of Whitehall to the public relations departments of the great corporations? It might seem so.

W.F.N.

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A Dramatic Way of Teaching Civics

By Thomas Baird

"Citizens of the Future" (G.B.I.—Strand)

IN THE EARLY years of this century we had reached a pitch in industrial output greater than at any previous point in history. The crying need was for technical education. But while our shipyards were building the biggest and fastest ships the world had ever seen our schoolboys were drafting maps and diagrams for the Battle of Waterloo. In the background educationists were propounding schemes of technical education and the public vaguely felt that there was an unbridged gap between a knowledge of Napoleon's movements and the construction and use of big ships.

The fact was that the teachers were teaching as they had been taught rather than teaching for the immediate, far less the ultimate, need. A moment's consideration shows us that a teacher of forty years of age is teaching for a situation that is already at least twenty years out of date, and that by the time a child has suffered this for ten years, he is already thirty years out of line with the march of the industrial and commercial world and consequently that much behind contemporary needs. *To-day we educate for a past or passing need.*

If we look at the curriculum in our schools we find this borne out. The so-called progressive schools have swung over from Classics and Pure Mathematics to Applied Science and Vocational Training. In addition we take the surplus workers for whom industry can find no place, and in special classes teach them trades and crafts in the vague hope that commerce will turn a corner and will suddenly find a use for the riveters, plumbers and art printers of our Instruction Centres.

The stock defence of this type of education is that if we train pupils in systematic thinking on dexterous technique in one respect we shall live to witness a transfer of skill when the system or technique is applied to other thoughts or other materials. Thus Euclidian Geometry has been taught in girls' high schools for years in the pious hope that by some miracle of transfer they should be able to apply their skill in the mental manipulation of triangles to the less exacting task of raising families. Experimental psychology has now given the lie to this, and that vague transfer, by which educationists have justified so many anomalies, has been exposed, if not as a fallacy, at least as a quite incalculable factor.

But in avoiding this extreme we must not fall into the cult of individualism, which, permitting of no corporate ideal, fosters a conception of independence, both personal and national, in a world where only corporate activity is significant. Individualism has sought the enrichment of personality, but has conceived personality as an individual sensibility and not as a co-operating unit. Children have been detached from the discipline of corporate work and encouraged to 'express' their own native personality. This step has been conceived as a fit preparation for a world where only co-operation in everyday affairs can matter. That personality can be expressed in corporate work has not been allowed any reasonable emphasis and culture has, therefore, been presented as a decorative quality of leisure and a matter of purely personal sensibility which should not be brought into the cold light of our working hours.

Our task then must be to avoid on the one hand an education which provides for a past need or for a contemporary need which will pass away before our children can play a part in it, and on the other hand an education which exalts individual personality into a fetish divorced from the needs and demands of the modern world. We must instead furnish sentiments and an apprehension of life, which will render the child adaptable as a citizen in a growing changing world.

The consequences of war and unemployment are making new demands on education, and the tragedy of lack of foresight will be re-enacted if we allow education to apply only to abnormal times instead of providing a basis for healthy social sentiments. This should allow for the development of personality, not merely as individuality, but also in relation to the developing community in which the pupil lives.

Here Civics comes in as a means of relating the essentials of education to the constantly changing needs of the adult world. Its present status in the schools falls short of this, for the fallacy of educating for past needs still holds sway. So the teacher who wishes to push his teaching of history, biology and geography beyond the 1900 mark is being led into the Civics field in fetters. He is dinned with the word "Reconstruction" and told that he must make again a world in which the engineers, the technicians and the other employed workers can take their place, or, alternatively, he is bade keep them happy until this reconstruction has been made.

And so the teacher sets out on a course of Civics which is rooted in history and politics, and endeavours by a politico-philosophical argument to present the contemporary situation in its historical perspective. Thus he hopes to evolve a conception of Citizenship. Even within these limits the attempts are sporadic and in the hands of a very few enthusiastic teachers.

Isolated efforts to tackle the problem are indicative of a growing desire to organise the material of citizenship teaching. One limit characterises them all: they are founded on and bounded by the classroom technique. New material is taught with the old instruments—instruments which have produced the lag between the school world and the real world, and the resultant teaching is inept because the instruments of the classroom technique are not supple enough to be adapted to the rapidly and constantly changing content of the material of Civics. The present classroom method permits only of the teaching of the forms of the modern world and not the stuff that it is made of. It can teach political divisions and from maps and books but it cannot teach the social process because it cannot teach from the living fact.

We need an elastic instrument which can not only transcribe life but can recreate life and interpret it for us—an implement supple enough to MOVE with the ever-changing social process.

Here is our need, and the social process is our material, but where is our instrument? This has been answered in some measure in the new documentary films and echoed a little in actuality broadcasting.

The documentary (or actuality) method is one to bring alive the real drama latent in everyday life. For the sociologist it is the means of bringing alive the people to the people. It has the advantage over the lecture system, or the classroom system, of providing not merely the best alternative to actual experience, but something which is in itself a complete experience of actuality. It can give a new experience of life; if the experience is enhanced by art its material is the fact. In the material we have the living fact, the necessary condition of teaching Citizenship.

In film is that supple instrument which can, not only transcribe and recreate the facts of the time, but can interpret the spirit of the time. The discovery of printing by the scholar made classical education possible; the discovery of film by the teacher may yet make Civic education a reality. Film is the instrument with which we may bridge the gap between the technique of the classroom and the new demands of the contemporary essential.

The films are in existence. The need is there.

1066 AND ALL THAT

Can we replace Alfred and his cakes and Bruce and his spider? This expert wants a history book that tells the story of hats, clothes and furniture

By RUSSELL FERGUSON

THE HISTORY BOOK at its very best is no more than a summary of the public life of the nation, and the public life of a nation tells us little about the underlying social realities.

When children reach the Secondary School their troubles begin. All of a sudden it is presumed that the concepts of kingship and property, law, equity, the State, political and personal rights, have magically formed in their minds, along with a sense of chronology which enables them to differentiate between a century and a twelvemonth, and off we go into political history. In the first year they fail to understand the Feudal System, and in the final year they break their teeth on Free Trade and Protection, with a host of Bloody Marys and Williams of Orange in between.

1066 *and All That* and Stephen Leacock's *Remains of History* show very clearly that the child's natural defence against school history is to misapprehend it when he is young and forget it when he grows up. The child is quite right, for school-history is just as well forgotten. The history book never seems to be telling us about something that really matters. It tells of kings, soldiers and premiers, treaties, battles, politics. It tells us of Elizabeth who was mortal, but nothing of Shakespeare who was not; of Charles II, but nothing of Newton or Reynolds; of Victoria and Palmerston, but nothing of Clerk Maxwell or William Morris. School history is political history, and politics is perhaps the last thing that a child may be expected even to begin to understand. Practically nobody really understands it, even among adults.

Even if political history were the only kind of history that exists, that would be no excuse for teaching it to children, for they can't possibly learn it. But there are plenty of other sorts of history, which they can learn, and which ought to be given to them.

"History-book romance"

All our chattels, to begin with, have their histories. At the age when, as things are, children are learning about Bruce and the Spider, carefully prepared histories of familiar everyday things like clothes and hats and furniture and houses would not only appeal to them, but would teach them a great deal which is at present left out. I have already seen one film which seemed to me to hold out great possibilities; the G.P.O. film on the history of the postal service, which was excellently contrived from old engravings and book illustrations. The sense of the past which one gets from authentic prints and pictures projected on a screen is a very real and very delightful thing. I am not in favour of dressing up actors and photographing them. An authentic vase, piece of furniture, or portrait photographed and projected carries a ring of truth which studio work, however careful, does not. For animation, I should prefer cartoon, which has a way of convincing in spite of being obviously artificial.

After *Bruce and the Spider*, and other history-book fairy-tales, children at present are given history-book romance, that is to say, they learn stories (generally false in essence), with historical characters and places in them. Clive and his pistol, Wolfe at Quebec, Nelson's blind eye, had I served my God, Calais written on the heart, it cam' wi' a lass and it will gang wi' a lass, etc., etc. I should be inclined to wash all this away, not so much because I think it does them harm, but because it uses up valuable time to very little purpose. They have to unlearn most of it.

No wonder we don't understand politics when

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we grow up. The reason is that our school history has destroyed our sense of realism in politics. The result of this is that when our newspapers, after the manner of history books, tell us that Italy wants Abyssinia, we never dream of asking *who* in Italy wants *what* in Abyssinia.

Even if they could learn political history, then it would avail the children little, because our political history is only a very small part of our real history. But in any case they are too young to learn it, and it is a sound teaching principle that if you teach a child something too soon, you impair his chances of ever learning it, especially if you let him think he knows it. For that reason I should be in favour of neglecting political history altogether, in school, except perhaps for sixth year pupils, who might get elementary lessons in it. I should go on with specific studies, trying to build up a sense of social history.

For the first three years of a five-year course, I should suggest the study of the histories of transport and the useful arts; always against the background of the eras, always with the periods clearly defined, and with maps and diagrams where necessary. I think of separate histories of course; a history of weaving and fabrics, of potting and glass, of metal-working, architecture, ships, each complete in itself and each reflecting, or rather illustrating at least the main stages in the development of Western civilisation. In all these histories, whether of games, food, fiddles, holidays, inns, I should hope to give an account of inventors and discoveries, celebrated characters (whether politically important or not) and to strive all the time to foster a sense of time and place.

For the next stage, fourth year and following, I suggest histories of the sciences and the arts, on similar lines, for by this time names like Newton, Boyle, Liebnitz begin to appear in the technical studies, the teachers concerned having little time to say who they were, when they lived, and what they achieved. Incidentally, I think that it is high time somebody set about making a comprehensive history of sound-film of Western music, for use in music academies. It seems to me that not only for historical work, but also for a good deal of technical work, the sound-film as a medium for the study of music has possibilities which nobody seems to see.

At this late stage in the pupil's development I should wish to offer laterally-cut sections of historical antiquities, with such titles as "Life in Roman Times," "Alchemy," "The Age of Discovery," "The Eighteenth Century," "The Coming of Steam," "Mass Production," "Imperial Expansion." It is not unlikely I should have to take this course back into the third year in order to make room for the following matters.

To senior pupils I should wish to show the histories of some of our institutions like hospitals, asylums, poor-houses, prisons, with some account of the persons concerned and of the legislation involved.

Finally there are some histories which I conceive as leading direct to the study of politics. These are, the history of taxation, the history of trade, the history of labour and trade-unionism, the history of capital. How much of this could be profitably tackled in the senior department of the school, I do not know, but I am quite sure that some sort of outline could be given, and that it would be extremely valuable, however elementary. At present we are shocked if a schoolboy does not know what a soldier is, but we consider it normal for him to leave school without knowing what a shareholder is. We expect him to understand imperial expansion without any notion of finance.

Now after all this, what results should I hope for? First of all, a staggering increase in general knowledge, with a corresponding increase in vocabulary. Then, a real and informed sense of our common cultural inheritance. Further, a sense of place and time and period. A knowledge of famous people. A civic sense. An informed interest in the law, and in public affairs.

This is all very fine, you say, but will the children take all this stuff? If you just reflect, you will realise that they are crying out for it, and will devour it if it is good enough and real enough for them. The book trade sells them hundreds of pounds worth of it every year—*The Boy's Book of Marvels, The Boy's Book of Engineering, The Great Explorers, Railways, Aeroplanes*—facts, facts, interesting facts. "Please sir, I have a book in the house, I'll bring it in to-morrow, it tells you all about making glass." The book trade thrives on the child's interest in things that are *real*. And history-book history certainly isn't real.

"... *a Way of Convincing*"

"*History-book history certainly isn't real*"

"School history is just as well forgotten"

"Kings, soldiers, treaties, battles"

EDUCATIONAL FILMS

The E.G.S. Service for the supply of films and projectors is available on subscription terms for the use of all schools, institutions and others interested in visual education. The library of classroom films has been carefully graded and has been made to the requirements of, or been approved by, education authorities. A wide range of cultural, interest and entertainment films is also included in the E.G.S. library, and a supply of religious subjects is maintained in co-operation with the religious film society.

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Institute's Conference on Entertainment Films

The Kinematograph Renters' Society will be invited en bloc to a conference on Films for Children which is being organised by the British Film Institute and which will occupy two days, November 20th and 21st.

The object of the conference is "to discuss in the light of present conditions how film entertainment specifically designed for children can be provided at public cinemas."

As an audience of five or six million children is concerned this problem should assume magnitude in the eys of the public and the trade.

Branches of the trade, educational bodies and the general public will be represented and it is hoped that some 500 people will attend. Delegates will be invited from numerous educational, religious and social organisations.

Opinion on the subject of film entertainment for children is growing strongly and it is felt that a move should be made to establish co-operation between the public and the trade before that opinion precipitates measures which might be satisfactory to neither.

The opening session of the conference will be devoted to a statistical analysis and Simon Rowson will deliver a paper outlining the scope of the problem. A paper will be read by a psychologist on the subject of children's tastes and the different problems of the trade, including finance, will also be discussed.

The final session of the conference will have four or five speakers representing the various points of view and they will present practical suggestions for the solution of the problems raised at the previous sessions.

It is felt by those practically interested in the subject that the selection of suitable films for children should be made at the times of general release and that copies of the films should then be set aside, re-edited if necessary, and made available for children's programmes.

At present there is a great deal of difficulty in securing copies of films after ordinary commercial exploitation has finished and the distribution machinery for individual pictures has ceased to operate. It is thought that a pooling system should be adopted by the film trade for the isolation of films approved by a body competent to judge their suitability and entertainment value.

During the conference the delegates will attend a children's matinee in a cinema. Children will occupy one part of the theatre and the adults will remain apart. A discussion on the reception of the films and the reactions of the children will follow.

PROJECTORS IN GLASGOW SCHOOLS

In accordance with the plan to install a film projector in every school in Glasgow the Education Committee has spent £2,641 in the financial year ending 31st May, 1936. Of this amount £748 was spent on the purchase and hire of films and £1,893 on projectors and screens.

When asked how he has achieved this feat Mr. R. M. Allardyce, Director of Education for Glasgow, had nothing to say.

Teachers and Experts Co-operate In New-Style Educationals

By Marjorie Locket

ONLY A SHORT WHILE ago the approach to the schools was hesitant, uncertain and experimental. To-day it is different. It is more assured. There is assurance on the part of those who are producing films for the educational world. They know that they now have a service to offer which responds to the necessities of those for whom they provide. They are providing a steady supply of films of a type which has already proved its value. They are seeking by consultation, research and experiment to enlarge this range, to incorporate new ideas and new teaching technique.

The teacher's path has become possible. The progressive teacher until now had only a limited supply at his disposal. Films were adapted, indiscriminately to any and every purpose. It was not unusual to see the same film used for advanced biological study, for the entertainment of junior audiences, for the delectation of film societies, for the instruction of agricultural or horticultural groups and finally for religious instruction and uplift propaganda.

It is different now. The standardising of mechanical equipment opens all supplies of films to the teacher. He can plan and design his programme from those sources which he is learning to associate with the particular type of film he needs. His projector will show both sound and silent films of the accepted 16 mm. size. He can, by means of a prism attachment, show films of any existing standard. If he prefers, for financial reasons, to develop gradually, he can be provided with a projector designed for silent and sound films, but of which he can acquire the silent portion for a reasonable sum, to be adapted later for sound. Both sound and silent versions of films are available.

By degrees a supply of film material is being built up as a serious contribution to school libraries. Our own Gaumont-British Instructional library is not a collection of material presumed to have value as educational illustration. It is not even material carefully edited and catalogued to make special appeal to the teaching world. Every film listed in its subject category has been carefully planned for that purpose and there are already more than a hundred ready and many more in the making.

It is that care that is the only limitation. An historical series of films takes time to produce. One or two subjects in this series may represent a year's achievement. But side by side with this an important biological series is being developed. A regional geographical survey is progressing constantly. Health, physical education, athletics are in production in another direction.

These series develop slowly but steadily and with the promise of a purpose and continuity which has been lacking up to now. The teacher was of necessity obliged in the past to adapt, often artificially, his limited material to his various purposes. Now he has the film placed in its proper category, graded for its different purposes, its content described in detail and reference. The handbook he receives as accompaniment to each film aids him in relating his film material to his syllabus, or in many cases working out his syllabus in relation to his film material. He has access to advice, drawn from experience in all types of education, if he consults the education department of the film producing company. And lastly he has the assurance that in the making of the new educational films both practising teachers and acknowledged experts have co-operated.

SORROWS OF A RURAL TEACHER

OURS IS A SMALL rural school tucked away between the Pennine Chain and the hills of Westmorland; the sort of place to which modern improvements come very slowly and are accepted only with reluctance by the inhabitants; yet I think I can claim that we were among the first to see the potentiality and usefulness of films in school. In the days when the Empire Film Library first issued their films, we had them and used them.

There was no dark room in the school; no money available for darkening one, nor for such an advanced idea as moving pictures in school, nor for a projector. So I hired the local cinema, obtained the use of their projector, and showed the films weekly. To meet the cost, those children who could brought 2*d.* each, and the cap was left for further subscriptions at the door. To avoid difficulties with authority, the films were shown immediately after school.

The results of this showed me how useful a film could be, and I was now fully convinced that the children could get a better idea of what another country or town was like by seeing a five-minute film of it than they could have if I had tried to describe it for an hour. I am more than ever convinced of this, even after hearing first-hand descriptions of other countries by experts during the school broadcasts. Listen to the school broadcast on Burmah and its rice-fields, as we did, and then see the film *Rice-growing in Burmah*. There is no comparison. No verbal description could possibly equal the film.

A new company took over the cinema, and imposed a charge for use of the hall that rendered the cost of that venture prohibitive, so there was a period of quiet.

I had a visit from a friend of the school one night, and this friend—after asking me a few questions—told me to buy a projector for use in school. We now have a film lesson every week, and I don't think the children would miss it for worlds. The darkening of the room was obtained by representing that the School Oculist needed this doing when he came round to test the children's eyesight. Previously I had had to purloin dust-sheets, curtains, blankets, etc., and hang them all up myself prior to each of his visits. The cost of hiring the films is still met by placing my cap at the door as the children go out, and hoping that enough will be contained therein to cover the costs of hire and carriage.

Now, however, the Authorities have discovered what I am doing, and are looking with a favourable eye upon the proceedings; but until last term the Authorities have contributed not a farthing to the scheme.

W. D.

FILMS

THE WAY OF THE CINEMA

By Andrew Buchanan. In this well-known book, every phase of film art and technique is discussed. C. A. Lejeune of "The OBSERVER" describes it as "emphatically a book to buy, study and annotate, and to keep in a handy place for reference." "The LISTENER" says: "He has produced a book which is at once concise, clear, easily understood by the man who possesses no previous knowledge whatever of the mysteries of cameras and studios, and which combines with its admirably conducted tour 'behind the screens' a good deal of shrewd criticism and robust common sense." 250 pages. Illustrated. (By post 5/5½). Net **5/-**

THE CINEMA IN SCHOOL

By W. H. George, B.Sc. With a Foreword by John Grierson. The author is a pioneer in educational film work, and his book, based on actual experience, is of great practical assistance to teachers. It is illustrated with over 60 stills from outstanding educational films. 136 pages. (By post 3/10½). Net **3/6**

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EMPIRE FILM LIBRARY

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The Empire Film Library was inaugurated by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester in 1935. Film productions of the late Empire Marketing Board and G.P.O. Film Unit are available in this Library for loan to schools and for approved displays by adult societies.

Recent additions include a number of 16 mm sound-on-film subjects dealing with scenery and wild game in the Empire.

For Catalogue (price 3d.) and forms of application for films, apply to:

The Secretary, EMPIRE FILM LIBRARY, IMPERIAL INSTITUTE, LONDON, S.W.7

A Complete Regional Geography of the World

EDUCATIONAL AND GENERAL SERVICES have issued their first full dress catalogue. In one respect it makes a welcome deviation in educational policy. The main emphasis is on the *short silent* film for classroom use as opposed to the longer film which is more suitable for the school hall. Teachers will welcome these films which are primarily classroom implements.

Some 40 of these silent shorts are the product of the Glasgow group of teachers who, under the supervision of the Director of Education for Glasgow, have been tackling the problem of providing specific illustrations to the curricular work of the schools. E.G.S. plan to concentrate on the teacher-made films. They are willing to consider films made by teachers or teachers' film groups with a view to their inclusion in their library. An Advisory Council composed mainly of practising teachers vet all films for school use and are anxious to advise teachers about to produce classroom films. This advice, if sought and taken, should do much to avoid needless duplication at a time when every foot of film is valuable, and this co-operation between teacher and distributor opens up a possible market for the school producer. This may solve some of the financial problems of amateur film production.

E.G.S. are to be congratulated on this attitude for, too often, in the enthusiasms for the new possibilities which cinema offers to education, the fundamental job of the teacher is forgotten.

Managing Director Commander Hunt aims to make available a complete regional geography of the world. But on this point he is diffident, for he realises that it is a huge undertaking. It may take a year or two, he said, or it may take a generation or two, but it is worth doing.

The first experimental step has been made by securing the rights on the material shot on the Elder-Dalrymple Expedition. The teachers' verdict on this will decide the next step. Other aspects of the E.G.S. policy are even more comprehensive. They aim to function as a clearing house for all information on educational films and also as a complete supply service. As well as answer all your queries they will supply you with any catalogue or any apparatus. They will arrange your programmes even if your choice of films is from the libraries of different producers.

E.G.S. is not a producing company but will co-ordinate for the teacher the main sources of supply. This should offer a solution to many of the problems which beset the teacher who uses films regularly either in connection with school lessons or as a recreational activity.

NOTES: L.C.C., Film Institute, Children's F.S.

For the second year the L.C.C. Education Committee in collaboration with producers and distributors, have organised a film experiment. In spite of the fact that results of last year's experiment are not yet to hand, this year's work has been arranged according to a definite plan.

Eight cinemas are being used and four programmes are being shown to mass audiences of children. Each programme has a definite theme. Programme I, *AUSTRALIA*, includes *This is Australia* and *Sydney Bridge*. Programme II is titled *WEATHER AND COAST*, and includes *Weather Forecast* and *Coast Erosion*. A third programme is *MAN'S WORK* and comprises *Water Power*, *Coal*, *Granton Trawler*, and *Night Mail*. *PAST AND PRESENT* is the final theme, and is represented by *Medieval Village*, *Life in the Highlands*, and the hawking and cooking scenes from *The Private Life of Henry VIII*.

An attractive booklet which gives a synopsis of each film has been issued to all teachers taking part. Specially devised tests will be given to the children after the displays.

* * *

That someone should attempt to link education by film with the broadcast to schools was inevitable. Whispers and rumours have taken their first concrete shape in a Film Institute list of films suitable for use with the Broadcast to Schools 1936-37. The arrangement has been done by the Central Council for School Broadcasting and is in their best vein, being monumental and hypercomprehensive.

The main job for teachers will be to sift out the useable and most appropriate films from this mass of good, bad, and indifferent. If B.B.C. teachers make reference to the films they will have little time for anything else; if they don't refer to them —well, what?

The British Film Institute now offers help to the teacher both before and after purchase of a projector for use in his school. The teacher requires information as to the types of projectors which exist, how many and what kind of films are available for each type of projector, where he can buy projectors and what are the prices of them, information on the various types of screens and on the problem of darkening a room, at the same time providing adequate ventilation.

These matters and a number of others are dealt with in the Institute's Leaflet No. 5 on projectors and films for schools. 12,000 copies of previous editions of this Leaflet were distributed and the revised edition is now available (price 7½d., including postage).

* * *

A leaflet on the manipulation and maintenance of projectors for teachers is being prepared, and it is hoped to arrange classes for teachers in the handling of projectors on the lines of the course carried out at the recent London Film School.

Articles on the use of educational films in the school and on many other related subjects are published in the Education Section of *Sight and Sound*, the Institute's quarterly journal.

The National Film Library set up by the Institute now possesses a number of films which can be hired at a nominal fee by teachers and education authorities who are associated in membership with the Institute. A catalogue of these films is now available and may be obtained from the Institute, price 1*s.* 2*d.* including postage.

* * *

Programmes for the Hampstead Children's Film Society this year will include a film from three groups of films entitled *How the World's Work is Done*, *How People Live in Other Lands*, and *Modern Heroes*, and a special newsreel, nature film, comedy and Disney cartoon.

Experiment at Brentwood

To ascertain how educational cinema may be organised in the school an experimental scheme has been instituted at Brentwood School, Essex.

A large room has been fitted out as a Projection Theatre. It has adequate ventilation, seating in tiers, dark blinds, a good screen, blackboard, demonstration bench, an epidiascope and a 16 mm. sound projector capable of showing both D.I.N. and S.M.P.E. films.

The opportunity to use films is open to all members of the staff. To this end a catalogue of nearly 900 films, embracing some thirteen commercial libraries, has been prepared and the interested masters have been given lists of available films on their special subjects. Subjects which will be concentrated upon are Nature Study, Biology, Physics, Geography and to some extent Chemistry and History. Later on in the year, films may be used for the illustration of Mathematics, Physical Training and other subjects.

The Projection Theatre and the apparatus will, in out-of-school hours, be available for film exhibition by the Field Club, Science Society, and other school organisations.

Film demonstrations will also be given at times to members of the various elevens and school teams. The school sports, on which there are several films available, include football, cricket, tennis, swimming and physical training. During the Winter and Easter terms, weekly exhibitions of entertainment films will be given for boarders and all day-boys who wish to attend.

The scheme is in the care of an Organiser who is responsible for the maintenance of the apparatus, the booking and care of films.

A subsidiary experiment will show, in the course of the year, what value is obtained from the use of films. A course of study in Natural History has been worked out and will be given to the three classes in the first form. The upper and lower classes will have the lessons illustrated by means of films, the middle class will not have films. By comparing the rates of progress of the classes in Nature Study with the rates of progress in other subjects it will be possible to ascertain whether the introduction of films is worth while.

AMERICAN EQUIPMENT SURVEY

A recent survey of visual and radio equipment in the schools of the United States yields the following figures:—

16,940 lantern slide projectors
3,035 still film attachments
2,825 film strip projectors
2,203 micro-slide projectors
2,616 opaque projectors
6,006 16 mm. silent projectors
449 16 mm. sound projectors
3,154 35 mm. silent projectors
309 35 mm. sound projectors
11,190 radio receiving sets
848 centralised radio sound systems

This data includes 95 per cent of the schools in cities having a population of 5,000 and over, and a great many of the smaller schools. It is, therefore, fairly complete.

Newsreel Rushes

by "The Commentator"

LIKE a giant airship casting its shadow across a flying flea, comes the announcement of "the deal," to dwarf all other film news of the month. If Gaumont-British and Associated-British do merge, three newsreels will be intimately affected: Gaumont-British, Pathé Gazette, and British Movietone. The first two claim the largest British circulations. When the wind drops in Wardour Street are heard whisperings in the air—some that sighed out through keyholes during the past few days: will there be a newsreel merger?

Pro—with 633 cinemas under single control, plus the free-lance circulation of the three reels, a single combined reel would have an assured market and financial security that would give it the key position in the British newsreel world. Such a position, allied to progressive and daring control, and with the resources of three production units, could go out and really put news on the screen. The technique of the March of Time plus the speed of the modern newsreel would make the whole world sit up!

Contra—each newsreel is popular, has its own public—many A.B.C. houses are just across the street from their G.B. "past rivals, future brothers," and it's well known that neighbouring managers like to show different newsreels—typical comment: "There's always been room for five, there always will."

If the three newsreels continue separate, what will happen to Movietone? To-day G.B. and Movietone work side by side—G.B. have no full foreign service of their own, get most of their foreign pictures via British Movietone and the world wide service of Movietonews of America—in return, Movietone is shown at a percentage of G.B. houses. But Pathé Gazette has its own foreign service, is tied with Pathé News of America, with Pathé Journal of France, with Ufa, the official German newsreel, with the government newsreel in Russia, with others in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, with agents everywhere. Will G.B. now transfer its "mutual co-operation" to Pathé—and will Pathé Gazette then take Movietone's place in the G.B. chain? If that happens, what will 20th Century Fox say? For they ultimately control British Movietone, and they still have a 49 per cent interest in G.B.

* * *

So McMahon is to sue G.B., presumably because they are believed to have used the words "attempted assassination" in referring to the famous incident in the Mall. And if the newsreels, why not almost every newspaper in the world? By the way, the proudest man in newsreeldom after the announcement of the suit was Pathé Gazette's tall white-headed Louis Behr. Playing for safety, he refused to use the word "assassination" in either title or commentary, put instead the phrase "dramatic incident." He's smiling now!

* * *

As G.B. shine in production, so do Paramount in foreign coverage. When there's a big story abroad, they almost always are out first and best—the Spanish war has been no exception. Their pictures have captured the very odour of battle. The blowing up of the Alcazar was a star in a milky way of fine newsreel reporting.

* * *

THE MONTH'S NEWSREEL GAG. Paramount's commentator speaking over ladies' hat fashions story:—"This one is called the Robin Hood. Robin Hood was surrounded by his merry men—the connection's obvious!"

* * *

A pity that the pictures of Squadron-Leader F. R. D. Swain's brilliant record high flight had to be taken two or three weeks before the actual attempt. The pictures were good, but they lacked the drama of the "actual occasion," and it was particularly noticeable that, after commentators had described how Swain had to slit open the window of his helmet, he stepped from the machine with the window intact. On another occasion, the Air Ministry should give the newsreels better facilities.

* * *

All round, the Johannesburg Air Race was a bad show for the newsreels. Delayed just another half-hour, the start would have made a fine picture—as it was, the machines were just shadows against the first glint of sunrise—and no one had the foresight to provide lighting. With no possibility of getting actual pictures of the race until days after the finish, the description of the progress of the fliers depended on clever production, and here, as they generally do where production is concerned, G.B. scored. As Emmott described Scott's victory, we saw a shot of the airman, sweating and dishevelled, stepping from his machine. It was taken, I suppose, from the England–Australia Air Race film, but it was none the less effective for that.

Opening my copy of *The Daily Film Renter*—the trade paper—on the morning of October 1st, I found the following:—

JO'BURG AIR RACE IN PATHÉ SPECIAL

Pathé Gazette special film of Capt. Halse passing Khartoum, was issued to all subscribers last evening. "Shots" of the 3,274 miles journey from Portsmouth were also included.

Captain Halse had left Portsmouth at about 6.30 a.m. on September 29th, and reached Khartoum at about 1 a.m. on the 30th. Obviously for Pathé's special to reach "all subscribers," including those in the North of Scotland on the evening of the 30th, it must have been sent out, at latest, by mid-day of the 30th. Now supposing that Pathé can do the essential editing, commentating, printing, and despatch in three hours from the receipt of the negative, which is pretty good, that means that they must have received the negative from Khartoum by 9.0 a.m. on the 30th, that while racer Halse flew from England to Khartoum in about 18½ hours, Pathé got their stuff back from Khartoum in 8 hours. Boy, do our newsreels woirk fast! But that wasn't all, in the same issue of *The Daily Film Renter* appeared the following:—

HOW THE AIR RACE WAS WON

G.-B. NEWS

When I saw this, on the morning of October 1st, as far as I know the race wasn't over, anyway the result didn't come through for hours. The G.B. publicity boss may not have meant what I read into those words, but I couldn't help paraphrasing the remark of the famous American newshawk: "That isn't a newsreel, that's a crystal ball!"

In the 1935 California Election for State Governor, Upton Sinclair's candidature was opposed by Hollywood movie interests. Their strategy was simple and effective. Cameras and sound-trucks were sent out to interview Californian citizens.

"When the releases were shewn in the Movie houses," says the *New Yorker*, "they proved to be the best comedies since Chaplin's two-reelers. The pro-Merriam (anti-Sinclair candidate) voters were unspectacular enough. The guffaws came when the pro-Sinclair enthusiasts were flashed on the screen. They scratched themselves as they spoke. They were dishevelled, bleary-eyed, shabby and and scrofolous. They stammered or lisped or spoke in squeaky voices.

"It was enough to defeat Sinclair," concludes *New Yorker*. "Every screen fan in California, to prove that he was not a congenital idiot, was inclined to vote for Merriam."

A Reply to Sketch Editor's Criticisms

by G. T. Cummins (*Editor, Paramount*)

I READ, WITH INTEREST, the observations by Mr. A. W. F. Sinclair published in your September issue. Mr. Sinclair's viewpoint is certainly refreshing and inclines me to think that he would make as good a newsreel man as he is a newspaper editor. Not that there is anything surprising in this, for many of the best brains in the newsreel game have developed their early knowledge of news value in Fleet Street.

To do justice, however, I think Mr. Sinclair would admit that the defects he points to have largely been eradicated from the modern newsreel. Nowadays, we are not content to edit the reel after it is taken. The larger part of our work is done long before a camera turns. The taking of newsreel pictures is not a matter of sending a crew out to shoot the story and hoping for the best. It is, of course, a commonplace to say that we know beforehand whether a story is likely to yield news pictures and we settle in advance which aspects to concentrate on.

Every one of our camera and sound men is trained to appreciate the value of a story before he sets out to shoot it, and the editing of the film shot is therefore, in most cases, a straightforward matter because the men in the field fully understand the requirements of newsreel make-up.

One of our biggest considerations is speed of operation, and we must never forget that our primary business is concerned with actualities. For all that, I am fully in agreement that the newsreel has an interpretative function which we exercise in a dual fashion.

Each story is considered in advance from every possible news and picture angle, and a balanced commentary is used where necessary to clear up any loose ends.

At times we have obtained "expert witnesses" to clarify and explain the significance of current events. For example, in the recent much-discussed "mercy killing" case, we incorporated the views of Father Vincent McNabb, a well-known Dominican preacher, and also obtained a brief authoritative expression of the opposition view.

It would be a good thing I think if it were better understood to what extent the making of screen news depends on men who never handle a camera. Very often plans are made, not only weeks but months ahead, and we are in the position of knowing, long before the general public is aware of certain coming events, that a given story will be in the Paramount reel. Our colleagues of the newspaper press have frequently given us valuable co-operation and for our part we have often been able to reciprocate by supplying pictures to them on occasions when we happen to be first.

In the recent Italian campaign in Ethiopia, our cameramen were in the field before the first troopships sailed. At the moment the results of newsreel staff-work are illustrated by the fact that our men are attached to the military commanders of both the Government and insurgent forces, the better to secure a complete picture of the present conflict in Spain.

NEWSREELS WILL CARRY U.S. GOVT. PROPAGANDA

WITH THE START of work by Pathé News on the first of the films "recording the story of Works Progress Administration activities," the Federal Government's attempt to plant news of government activities in American newsreels was officially under way.

Printed forms were sent from W.P.A. Washington headquarters on July 17th, inviting commercial newsreel companies to submit bids on a contract for production of such films.

Under "Distribution," the contract read as follows: "The contractor shall agree to cause to be released and/or distributed one newsreel story on the subject of W.P.A. activities each month during the life of this contract through the medium of a nationally distributed newsreel."

Although the W.P.A. is only required to invite three bidders, forty-one were actually solicited, "to secure additional competition." One conspicuous omission was that of Universal News, which, in an advertisement addressed to the trade early this Spring, advised exhibitors, "Don't let your screen be used for propaganda by anyone or any interest."

The clause which interests motion-picture men and anti-Administration observers the most is that binding the contractor to "cause to be released and/or distributed . . . through the medium of a nationally distributed newsreel" each of the W.P.A. films.

This is not the government's first contact with film production during the current year. Newsreel companies were invited, as of March 17th, to submit bids on a contract to produce films for the Federal Housing Administration. This was denounced by Representative Bertrand H. Snell as a "bold and flagrant diversion of relief funds to campaign purposes." A resolution was introduced by Senator Davis, of Pennsylvania, calling for investigation of W.P.A. activities. The reply of W.P.A. Administrator Harry L. Hopkins was that the War Department had compiled a motion-picture record of the World War, and that this and other precedents amply justified his organisation in making a film record of its operations.

He said, moreover, that the executive order by President Roosevelt, which created the W.P.A., directed the W.P.A. Administrator to "formulate and, with the approval of the President, to require uniform periodic reports on all projects; and this certainly included report by film."

As far back as June, 1935, Sydney H. MacKean, a former newsreel employee, was assigned to establish a Motion Picture Records Division of the W.P.A., and to employ cameramen and others to assist in the production of films depicting the work of the W.P.A.

The W.P.A. requires that "the finished production" be "of such high entertainment standard as to be acceptable for exhibition in any commercial motion picture theatre within the United States." The films are to consist of "subjects and sequences of State and/or city-wide interest." The W.P.A. agrees to furnish "a liaison man in each state to make all necessary arrangements regarding films to be recorded, approvals, and other similar matters." The company is required to "furnish a qualified script writer, film editor, camera crew, technicians, director, actors and actresses, the use of studios, lighting equipment, a competent production and idea man in Washington during the life of the contract," and related personnel, properties, and services.

Concerning the bidding, "The Government reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or any part or parts thereof and to award the contract or any parts thereof to other than the lowest bidder, as the interest of the Government may require. All other factors being equal, the award will be made to the bidder who is better able to aid in distribution both theatrical and non-theatrical. The decision of the contracting officer shall be final."

The first film under the contract, which was awarded to Pathé News, will be produced in Michigan, while former employees of the Motion Pictures Records Division of the W.P.A. seek jobs elsewhere, since their services are no longer required. The former employees have been given to understand that the Government will find berths for them elsewhere in the W.P.A., wherever possible.

NEWSREEL ANALYSIS—SEPTEMBER

NEWSREEL	Total Number of Items Spotted	SPORT	ROYALTY	MILITARY, ETC.	FOREIGN	EMPIRE
British Movietone News	91	22	5	6	19	1
British Paramount News	52	8	7	5	13	3
Gaumont-British News	88	20	8	5	26	1
Pathé Gazette	58	14	5	4	13	3
Universal Talking News	68	17	4	9	15	1
TOTALS	357	81	29	29	86	9

FILMING A TOWN

By Andrew Buchanan

THE AMATEUR DIRECTOR who resides in a town as do the majority, is often at a loss to know what to film, whereas he is living in the middle of a subject that offers him the best material he can ever hope for. Whether it be Golder's Green, Guildford, or Grimsby, countless opportunities surround him, which he should not only take advantage of, but know exactly how to go about the task. My first piece of advice, therefore, is to urge him to restrain his enthusiasm, and use his brains before he begins to use his camera. Planning to film the town in which one lives is to see it, probably for the first time, with a cinematic eye—to view the locality as if one were inside a camera, peering through the lens.

Now, to be able to look upon a place cinematically needs study and the development of one's creative ability, for one has to *recreate* the town so that the ultimate film shall present a complete screen version of it, from the Director's viewpoint. In this connection it is interesting to remember that if ten Directors all live in the same town, each will produce an entirely different screen version of it. That fact entirely removes the somewhat prevalent idea that filming a town means reproducing, in moving pictures, a dozen lengthy long shots which have been on sale in postcard form, at old-fashioned stationers' for the last twenty-five years.

We should begin, therefore, by studying the familiar locality afresh, and making brief notes of everything which contributes to the general character of the place. These observations will form the foundation of the scenario, or shooting script, which the Director must complete before he turns to his camera. "But," he may argue, "I know the town backwards—surely there is no need to write a scenario about it?" On the contrary, a scenario, of a simple type, is essential, for the amateur Director must systematise his mind and the best way to do this is on paper. Years hence, he may be able to grasp a subject, in all its essentials, within five minutes, and shoot it without hesitation, but, at present, he will lose nothing and gain everything, by planning his film on paper before he begins to capture it on celluloid. Nevertheless, his shooting script, which, incidentally, he can write in any way he pleases, providing he can understand it, should not be confused with the unnecessarily elaborate scenario, full of impressive-looking technical jargon, which is quite unnecessary. Such scripts are written by professional scenarists for Directors who cannot write themselves, and who are unable to deviate from the written instructions for an instant.

The Amateur should, at this stage, decide to scorn such mechanical methods, and plan his own private scenario so that, whilst it provides the foundation for his picture, it offers him full scope to deviate from it, and to take advantage of every opportunity which occurs whilst he is on location. Later on in this Series I will deal exhaustively with script writing, but at this stage whilst non-fictional films are being considered, it will be wiser to leave the Director to write his own script from the list of notes made during his study of the location in question.

Now we may assume that the town dweller is about to set out to study his locality, complete with note-book, and that he has prepared himself to regard everything from a filmic viewpoint. His first task, therefore, is to capture something about the place which is actually invisible—*character!* Now the formula for making visible something which is invisible, is to film a number of very carefully selected material things which, individually, may be unimportant, but which, collectively, create the essential character of a place. Thus, out of a group of visible, and seemingly insignificant objects, there emerges the one dominating, invisible factor which most truly expresses that fundamental "something" about the place—its character, which hovers over everything and everybody. If this is not captured, firstly on paper, and ultimately on film, the purpose and point of the picture is definitely lost.

In setting out to find all those little things which are going to build up the character of the Director's home town, we should remember that our location must, of course, be fictitious, embodying characteristics common to most modern, overcrowded, and unscientifically planned towns. Firstly, the film should establish clearly where the town is, and I suggest that a large scale map will do this excellently, if a wandering finger is seen searching for the town in question, thereby showing its relation to the surrounding country.

The next thing to do is to show, as boldly as possible, the name of the place—we'll call it Tintown. Where can this name be seen in a representative setting? Is the town on a river, and if so, does the name appear on a pier, a boathouse, or a bridge? If there is no river, and no surrounding country, but, instead, never-ending factories, then perhaps the name is plastered up on a brick wall that is perpetually licked by smoke. If the neighbourhood is of a "refined" nature, maybe its name is attractively swung over a green, and shadows of foliage embellish it. Whatever and wherever it is, whether on a brewery, giving employment to eighty per cent of the population, or across the top of the post office, the film should begin with a pictorially descriptive shot of the town's name, and into that simple shot, by careful selection, something of the character of the location should creep.

And now, in proceeding to tabulate the chief characteristics, I would point out that to condense the treatment into one article, I am eliminating the intermediate stage of script writing, and assuming that the notes on paper and the actual shots on location are one. We begin by wandering down the main thoroughfare, or High Street. It is always crowded. This is best planted by shots of feet for ever passing each other on pavements. What are all these people doing? Shopping. Ah! what are the shops like? Window construction and external ornamentation will reveal their age, and the class of people they cater for. Maybe they are old and quaint, with many little panes, or perhaps they are a mass of chromium, with large metallic lettering, and generally garish. It is highly probable they will be a mixture of both, huddled together—the work of each age conflicting with the next.

Modern High Streets are filled with building atrocities—one shop gleams, the next is drab. Charming old roofs lean towards concrete flat ones. Note all these points on the list, for they are helping to build up character. Now turn to

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the kind of commodities which for ever tempt the shoppers. Food is the first essential, and you will find at least ten butchers' shops within a quarter of a mile. You may or may not eat meat, but the majority of people appear to do so. That is important. Note down ten butchers. Perhaps ten cheap tailors, too, and an even greater number of shops devoted to permanent waving. What's that awful row clearly audible above the noise of the traffic? A Radio shop, crammed with sets which all seem to be blaring together. "Easy Terms." Cards displaying these enticing words are propped on every set—and on every arm-chair in the furnishing shops.

The crowds live on Easy Terms, but not, apparently, with each other, as they scramble, jostle, and dither across roads. Remember particularly to note "Easy Terms," and those Radio sets. A large car showroom next, complete with palms, glaring lights, and new models—more "Easy Terms" recline on the chromium radiators. This model is guaranteed to do ninety miles an hour! Make a note of that display card; ninety miles an hour, and then turn your attention to the seemingly permanent traffic block in the High Street—the panting buses—the cumbersome horse-drawn carts, the whole cavalcade of chaos, and look swiftly back again to the card in the showroom stating ninety miles an hour!

You can cross-cut those shots, and the significance will be apparent to the dullest member of your audience. Food, radio, transport—well, entertainment comes next. Note the numerous temples dedicated to films—in the grimiest of districts, these glittering palaces proudly stand, contributing in no small degree to the character of the town. Note them—their entrances, and their posters, must go on the list. Pause for a moment, to remember that when translated into film, your notes will have become a number of separate strips showing hurrying feet, shop façades, "Easy Terms" on cards, traffic blocks, cinemas, piles of meat, and these shots, collectively, will create, to a great extent, the bartering life, and the character of the population.

Wander away now to the roads in which people live. Firstly, there are attractive detached residences surrounded by trees, and winding drives. Further away, houses seem to have been drilled by some military monster, for they stand in long straight lines—all alike. Hidden behind these are slums, having a very permanent look about them. Note a long sleek car moving away from a large house, and a filthy child, in a soap box on wheels, moving away from a slum dwelling. The comparison is pictorially interesting.

We must not forget the hospital with its inevitable hoarding, beseeching the passer-by for money, to build an extension, and in this connection one is almost certain to be able to find a mammoth cinema, public house, or soaring block of flats being rapidly built. There is plenty of money to build cinemas and public houses, but not hospitals. Reveal this if you wish—ignore it if you feel so inclined, but such current activities depending on money or the lack of it, shown side by side, contribute forcibly to the town's character.

Now all that suggested material, carefully assembled, should create a vivid, and rather fast-moving prologue. The whereabouts and the name have been established, then there follows an analysis of the High Street, the crowds, where they live, *how* they live—Easy Terms—the brave hospital that is penniless, the umpteenth cinema

"Roof-tops of London." (Strand Film)

of the modern world, creates a refreshing interlude, which should be dealt with accurately, and being erected, the complex blending of frustration in transport, and eagerness for speed.

So far so good, but the tempo should now become more leisurely, to permit the permanent features of the town to be described. The church, or churches, together with any remaining old houses and original parts deserve attention, and should be portrayed in bold, close shots. The local librarian will gladly lend old prints that show what the town looked like centuries ago, and these intercut with existing remains have an instantaneous appeal.

Now, so far we have concerned ourselves with character, and have then dipped, for a moment, into the past, but we must return to the present, and reveal the occupations by which people live. If the town is a suburb of a residential nature, the wage earners will be seen in thousands, every morning, making for the railway station, or congregating at bus stops prior to disappearing into "the city" until evening. If the town is industrial—early morning will show vast numbers going to their factories—steel works, potteries, armaments, cotton mills, coal mines. In a "one-industry" town, the influence of the factories will be apparent everywhere, and one must discover how this is so, and note all observations carefully.

Relaxation is the last sequence—greyhound racing, football, beer—these provide mass entertainment for the majority, and motor cycling provides an "escape" (if they're lucky) for others. The week-end unlocks the door to brief freedom; the factory fires are damped down; the roads are filled with people, outward bound; the cinemas blaze away as usual, for work has stopped, save, of course, for countless meals being cooked, disclosed by rows and rows of smoking chimneys.

I have purposely refrained from treating this subject technically, because I feel that subject matter is the first essential, and only when the right angle has been obtained, and the Director knows exactly what, or what not to shoot, then it is time to deal with camera angles, cutting, filters, and all the rest of it.

The major point is that the vast majority of amateur Directors are fully acquainted, and very efficient with technicalities, but lack an ability to utilise their equipment and knowledge by acquiring the right kind of material. Hence, the above generalising survey of a Town—any town—and if my framework is broadly adhered to, the result should be an original, filmic impression of the locality. The essential point of this is that cameras and cutting benches are of secondary importance until the Director has thoroughly accustomed himself to looking at everything *cinematically*, and also *systematically*.

This, together with an ability to weave his own personality and viewpoint into his pictures, will lift him from the crowded ranks of mechanical cameramen to the exclusive gallery wherein one finds moving-portrait painters.

Amateur Clubs

HESTON CINE CLUB was founded in February, 1935, and has now about 30 members. Its activities include experimental work and film production. The Club has six productions in the editing stage, the results of its summer work.

BALHAM AMATEUR CINE CLUB has between 20 and 30 members, and is now producing a thriller, *The Strange Case of Dr. Rintelin*, on 16 mm. stock. This film, when completed, will be available to other societies. The Secretary of the Society is A. F. Durell, 52 Melrose Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey.

ACE MOVIES was formed in 1929. They won the Era Challenge Cup in 1931 with their film *The Kris*, and again in 1932 with *Resthaven Cottage*. The same year they won the third prize at the Amsterdam International Cine Contest. Membership is about thirty, and the Secretary is Eric G. Notley, Highfields, Albion Road, Bexleyheath, Kent.

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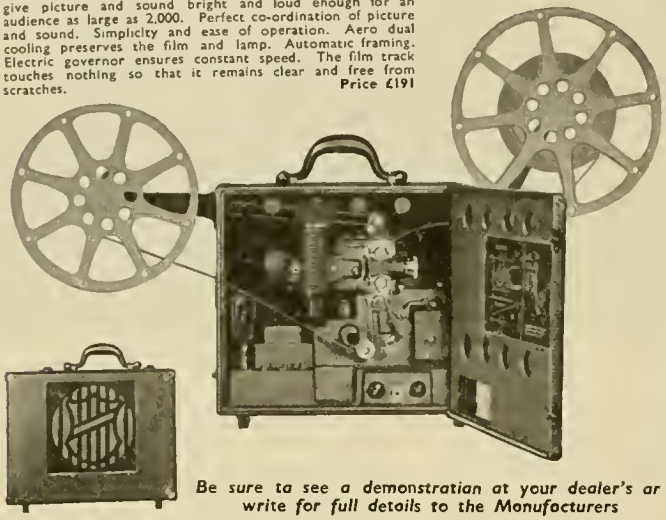

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SIGHT AND SOUND

No. 19. JUST OUT
SIXPENCE

THE FILM QUARTERLY — FOR NEWS & VIEWS

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Criticism by Graham Greene — Reviews by John Marks

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LEEDS, CULTURAL METROPOLIS OF THE NORTH—OR IS IT?

THE LEEDS FILM SOCIETY, founded by Stanley Crawford and Alec Baron, began in October, 1932, giving private shows of the now widely known sub-standard versions of the German and French classics. Soon a large number of people was attracted, who in the days of 1927-28 had been patrons of the Savoy Cinema, Leeds, the provincial off-shoot of Stuart Davis' Avenue Pavilion Repertory movement. A projector and other equipment were bought.

"By Spring of 1933," writes Stanley Crawford, "we felt we had sufficient support to try organising a Summer Season, with lectures, discussions, library of film literature, and standard film. We had to begin with a room which, though centrally placed, would not excite too much official curiosity. We found a basement room with two windows at one end opening out into a low yard. In this yard we fixed up the two silent projector leads we had bought and blocked out the window to leave just the four necessary port-holes. Thus we could cater for nearly a hundred inside the room, whilst we ourselves projected outside in the open yard. There were no rainy Sunday evenings in the Summer of 1933—luckily.

"Soon we managed to acquire two six-inch Taylor-Hobson wide aperture projection lenses. The Society got dozens of letters applying for membership, some as far afield as Huddersfield, Bradford, and York.

"Through the kind help of a member we managed to get for our shows: *Homecoming* (Joe May); *At the Edge of the World* (Karl Grüne); *The Girl in the Moon* (Fritz Lang); *Nina Petrovna* (Hans Schwartz), and *Turksib* (Turin). The season ended in September with a Group visit to London to see Pabst's *Don Quixote* at the Academy.

"Flushed with the success of the season, though with sore hands from rewinding thousands of feet of film, through lack of a rewinder, we set out to get the use of the Leeds Academy Cinema for the Winter of 1933-34, for private Sunday shows. We wanted sound films and more congenial surroundings. We could not afford our own apparatus: the Cinema was in use on six days of the week. With all the tact and influence we could muster, we approached the Watch Committee. Some of their members approved, some disapproved; one was suspicious that we were going to organise pornographic displays!

"After another meeting, it was intimated that permission would probably be given. Preparations were made for our third season. Our bookings arranged, orchestra fixed and rehearsed for the first show (*Waxworks*), theatre fixed, all our money gone in these preparations, the Watch Committee retracted following a fierce attack from the local C.E.A. through the Press. We were supposed to be trying to force Sunday opening in Leeds!

"The bottom fell out of everything—we had no means or money to contest our case. The film Group retired into a dormancy from which it has never yet been rescued."

Film Society Personalities

C. A. Oakley, round, rubicund and energetic, is Chairman of the Glasgow Film Society and Joint-Secretary of the Scottish Film Council. A Devonian, he came to Scotland to study naval architecture at John Brown's Shipyard, Clydebank. He took his B.Sc. in engineering and naval architecture, and his Ed.B. at Glasgow University while still engaged in journalism and cartoon work for the *Bulletin*. Became

lecturer at Aberdeen University, returning to Glasgow as director of the Scottish Division of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, lecturing in the same subject at Glasgow University. He has recently undertaken a survey of Scottish industrial conditions for the Scottish Development Council and a book on his findings is in the Press. Hobbies: lecturing, drawing cartoons, sitting on committees.

THE FILM SOCIETY movement in Edinburgh is as old as **Norman Wilson's** conception of it. The place of birth was the hot sands of a Yorkshire resort while he was basking there one summer holiday. An active association with Charles Graves in the Scottish publishing concern, the Porpoise Press (since taken over by Faber & Faber) had ended and he was looking round for another outlet for his energy. When he came back from holiday, the project absorbed all his enthusiasm and, as he has done ever since, he worked hard to establish the society—or Guild as it was called to distinguish it from the Workers' Film Society formed shortly before. His first plan was a repertory arrangement with a local cinema, but this fell through and, after an unhappy period in the wilderness of suburban picture houses, the society settled in one of the largest cinemas in the city.

Since that time the Edinburgh Film Guild, sustained by his energy and enthusiasm, has never looked back. He never thought of it as a medium for Sunday afternoon diversion and, under his guidance, its activities have always reflected its aim: "The study and advancement of film art." An international exhibition of film stills, special performances for children, a documentary of Edinburgh, a monthly film guide—and eventually the creation of *Cinema Quarterly*. What hours and hours and *hours* of work went into that paper! Again those characteristic qualities—energy, enthusiasm, flair for organisation—carried the *Quarterly* on for three years, its influence steadily extending, respect for its moving spirit increasing. After those three strenuous years, it was something of a relief for him to play the rôle of comparative spectator and watch his paper develop into a monthly. During this period he also took a prominent part in the movement which led to the formation of a co-ordinating body for film interests in Scotland, the Scottish Film Council, and later he supported strongly the recent independent step taken by the Federation of Scottish Film Societies. All of these and the regular film writing he undertakes may not suggest a recreation; but in his own professional sphere in the book world he has equally made a mark. The Scottish film scene would not look quite the same without the diminutive bundle of energy that is Norman Wilson.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD

The seventh season opened with a showing of Sacha Guitry's *Bonne Chance*. Several documentary and interest films were included in the programme together with a puppet fantasy by Len Lye. At the end of the performance an informal tea-meeting was held. Discussion meetings are also held on the Wednesday following each performance at the E.F.G. Clubroom, at the Monseigneur, Princes Street, Edinburgh, which is open daily to members from noon to 11 p.m. The Secretary is Douglas A. Donald, 16 Great King Street, Edinburgh 3.

THE CATHOLIC F.S.

A showing of the entire film repertory of this society will be held on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, November 4th, 6th and 7th, at the Millicent Fawcett Hall, Westminster, at 8 p.m. each evening. Tickets for these performances can be obtained from the Secretary, Catholic Film Society, 36 Great Smith Street, S.W.1. Price 1*s.* unreserved and 1*s.* 6*d.* reserved.

STIRLING

A meeting, addressed by Norman Wilson and C. A. Oakley in Stirling, has resulted in the formation of the Stirlingshire Film Society. Final plans for the first season are not yet completed, but it is hoped to include special showings of social service and educational films. The Secretary is Miss Mary Dingwall, Abbey View, Causewayhead, Stirling.

BILLINGHAM

In addition to the Society's usual regular performances on Wednesday evenings, special revival programmes of British and American films are to be held. The films to be shown at these special performances will include *Cavalcade*, *The 39 Steps*, *The Thin Man*, and *Ruggles of Red Gap*. The Secretary is H. S. Coles, 3 Cambridge Terrace, Norton-on-Tees.

WOLVERHAMPTON

Season 1936–37. Membership Secretary: J. N. Tomlins, "Astolat," Tettenhall, Wolverhampton. Programme Secretary: E. L. Packer, Himley Crescent, Wolverhampton. Seven meetings will be held during the season at the West End Cinema.

ETON COLLEGE

The Society held its first meeting on October 10th in the School Hall. Among the films shown were: an issue of the *March of Time*, an educational short, *Nursery Island*, and *Jack Ahoy*. The next meeting of the Society is on November 21st.

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"I was a singer first: I'll be a singer last."

Jeanette MacDonald

"Give me a gun, a horse and a mountain lion then I'd be happy."

Clark Gable

"I was desperately keen to be a highwayman at one time."

Bruce Woolfe

"I'll punch him in the nose if he said that."

Fanny Brice

"As I suppose you know, I am not a Shakespearean fan."—*Tatler, of the Daily Film Renter.*

GERTIE, THE GIRL IN THE THRILLERS

I'm Gertie the Girl in the Thrillers,
I'm Gertie the Goose-Pimple Queen.
Monstrosities maul me,
No wonder they call me
The worst-treated girl on the screen!
I yearn to go Gaynor
And look like Marlene
Who bend gorgeous brutes to their wills.
Instead I'm imprisoned in rooms full of rats,
I'm hugged by gorillas and bitten by bats,
I want to go Garbo and wear comic hats!
I'm Gertie, the Queen of the Thrills!

I'm Gertie, the Girl in the Thrillers,
My job is all shudders and swoons;
I long to be able
To star with Clark Gable,
Instead I'm teamed up with baboons!
I don't do much nestling,
I'm only seen wrestling
With monsters in mouldy old mills;
My features were classical once, and austere,
But now they're all wrinkled thru' regist'ring fear,
And I've Dracula's toothmarks still left in my ear!
I'm Gertie the Queen of the Thrills!

I'm Gertie the Girl in the Thrillers,
I star in the films that affright,
I'm not seen in sables
At tête-à-tête tables
With Music, a Man and the Night.
The fellows *I* dine with
All doctor my wine with
The most undesirable pills;
I'm forced to assist at mysterious rites,
And whole flocks of vampires attack me at nights,
Come up some time and I'll show you my bites!
I'm Gertie the Queen of the Thrills!

RODNEY HOBSON

LUCID INTERVAL

JOHN SHEPHARD RAPPED AS KEEPING CLEAR CHANNEL BLOC CONSTANTLY ON HOT SEAT. (Headline in *Variety*)

DITTY FOR EXHIBITORS

"Odeon, what can the matter be?"

TOOTS PARAMOUR CALLING

A scoop for you this month, boys and girls. . . . By means of tear-gas, cosmetics, and the Paramour super-smile I forced my way into Melbatone's new fifty-million-pound studios on Hackney Marshes.

* * *

It was not so easy to get in, even so, and by the time I had eluded the snarling packs of firemen and commissionaires—they chased me like the hyænas in Thunderblast's *Whose Baby are Zoo*—I was lost, but alone, and still an honest working girl . . . so I explored all by myself. . . .

* * *

I saw the cafés where great actors, under contract for years and years, pecked miserably at presscuttings of their stage successes and waited for the far-off day when a part might be assigned to them . . . I saw the chromium crèches where the stars and supers alike can leave their kiddies while they wait for rehearsals. . . . I saw the props department, where countless first editions of untold value were being torn up for a snow scene. . . . I saw the cutting-rooms where raving lunatics were mopping and mowing as they tried to decide which out of the 79 takes of Antonia Gumdroppe's smile was the least nauseating.

* * *

But I never saw the studio, and after hours of fruitless search I was trapped by an executive, an ace-electrician, and a small-part player under long term contract . . . and between them I was frogmarched to the platinum gateway and cast forth into the wilderness of the marshes. . . . So no wonder your Toots is not herself. . . .

SHORT SNIPS

Rumoured tie-up between Superblistertone and Og-Films, officially denied by Guggenheim MacAndrew.

* * *

Og-Films definitely announces forty-million-pound merger with Superblisterbone. . . . Fugg Prampusch threatens legal proceedings by wire from Los Angeles.

* * *

Abe Maurdough, Og-Films dictator, flies Atlantic and deposits three millions in gold in the bank of Nova Scotia. . . . Fugg Prampusch threatens legal proceedings.

* * *

Press announces merger between Superblistertone and Prampusch Productions Inc. . . . Riots in West End during hunger march of patriotic film fans. Eulalia Butterscotch sings "Abide with Me" in Trafalgar Square . . . mob abides.

* * *

Abe Maurdough swims Channel and deposits underlinen in Bank of France. . . . Superblistertone announce new production line-up, with all Og-Film players. . . . Fugg Prampusch sends sheaf of indelicate postcards by air mail. . . .

* * *

Rumoured tie-up between Superblistertone and Og-Films officially denied by Guggenheim MacAndrew.

WHAT PRICE LOUELLA?

Salutations to HARIGHAND BAIJAL, ace critic of Bombay's *Moving Picture Monthly*, for his pen-pictures of noted Indian film stars. Says Harighand . . .

MISS GOHAR "She is a bit bulky and in order to gain more fame she must reduce herself. In singing also she gives cent per cent interest."

MISS MADHURI "Buoyant in spirit, spotly in manners and behaviour, that sweet smilling (*sic*) face always leaves behind a happy remembrance."

RATAN-BAI "She is screen's sweetheart. She is blooming youth having very long lustrious hair. Her voice is exceedingly sweet. . . . If you hear her at once, her songs will continue ringing even in your dreams."

MOTI LAL "His name is on every man's lips. He takes a keen interest in his work. He is a thorough gentleman. . . . We have every hope that, if such is the speed remains, he will very shortly reach the ladder of fame."

MAZHAR KHAN "In his *Night Bird* he also won the race. He was superb in his rôle of villain, the gang leader. His all six make-ups were superb."

SAIGAL "Village simplicity, innocence, agony of heart, drunkness he has superbly brought out. He is a fine singer, too."

DAVE ROBSON says:—

The right to smoke in cinemas is being hotly debated in the daily press of Edinburgh, in fact it all but represents a new phase in sex warfare in the Scottish capital.

"Fair maidens complain that the black curling smoke from father's old clay is not only ruining their tresses, and their vision—*but*, their very amusement.

"So that in order to find out exactly what was going on behind the scenes I visited a Princes Street cinema.

"Forearmed with a bag of sweeties and a dab of lavender water, I answered in the negative when challenged if I were a smoker, and was duly deposited where all good patrons go.

"I soon became conscious of my feminine surroundings; chatter chatter all the time, broken only by the cracking of a nut or a munch at latent gum, not to mention the repugnant aroma of mixed cosmetics and scent that rent the air.

"And, when eventually the lights went up, there was I—the only species in long trousers in that vast aviary!

"And so, when the lights mercifully dimmed again, I sought the solace of the homely 'Exit' sign, muttering as I left with ignominy, 'Be players, girls; be Players, *please*'!"

LORUM

NIGHT MALE

"Delos Chappel, producer of *Daughters of Atreus*, will try to lure the girls by having male members of the company specially fitted with costumes that will emphasise the male physique . . . hefty chests mean less adornment on that section. Those in the scrawny class will get padded effects." (From *Variety*.)

He looked so lovely on the stage
—A superman of supermen—
You never would have thought he
Was such a scraggy specimen
And definitely looked his age
All bits and bones—and forty.
For what the impresario
So delicately added
Made him a real Lothario
All passionate and padded
(And not a single lady guessed
They weren't real hairs upon his chest)

SNOOKS GREISER, *W.F.N.'s* pestilential lift-boy, whizzed a certain O. Deutsch up and down the lift shaft for twenty minutes the other day.

Snooks: "So you're pulling down the Alhambra and putting up another Odeon there, huh?"

Deutsch: "Stop the lift."

Snooks: "And you're opening with *I, Claudius*, huh?"

Deutsch: "Stop the lift, stop the lift."

Snooks: "And *I, Claudius*, hasn't gone into production yet, huh?"

Deutsch: "Stop the lift, stop the lift, stop the lift."

Snooks: "So what about blind booking now, huh? I suppose all Denham productions have to stay on the shelf until you build a new cinema for them, huh? Third floor, Patisserie, Confiserie, Doughnuts, Disinfectants and *World Film News*."

AUNTIE HORRIBLE'S CORNER

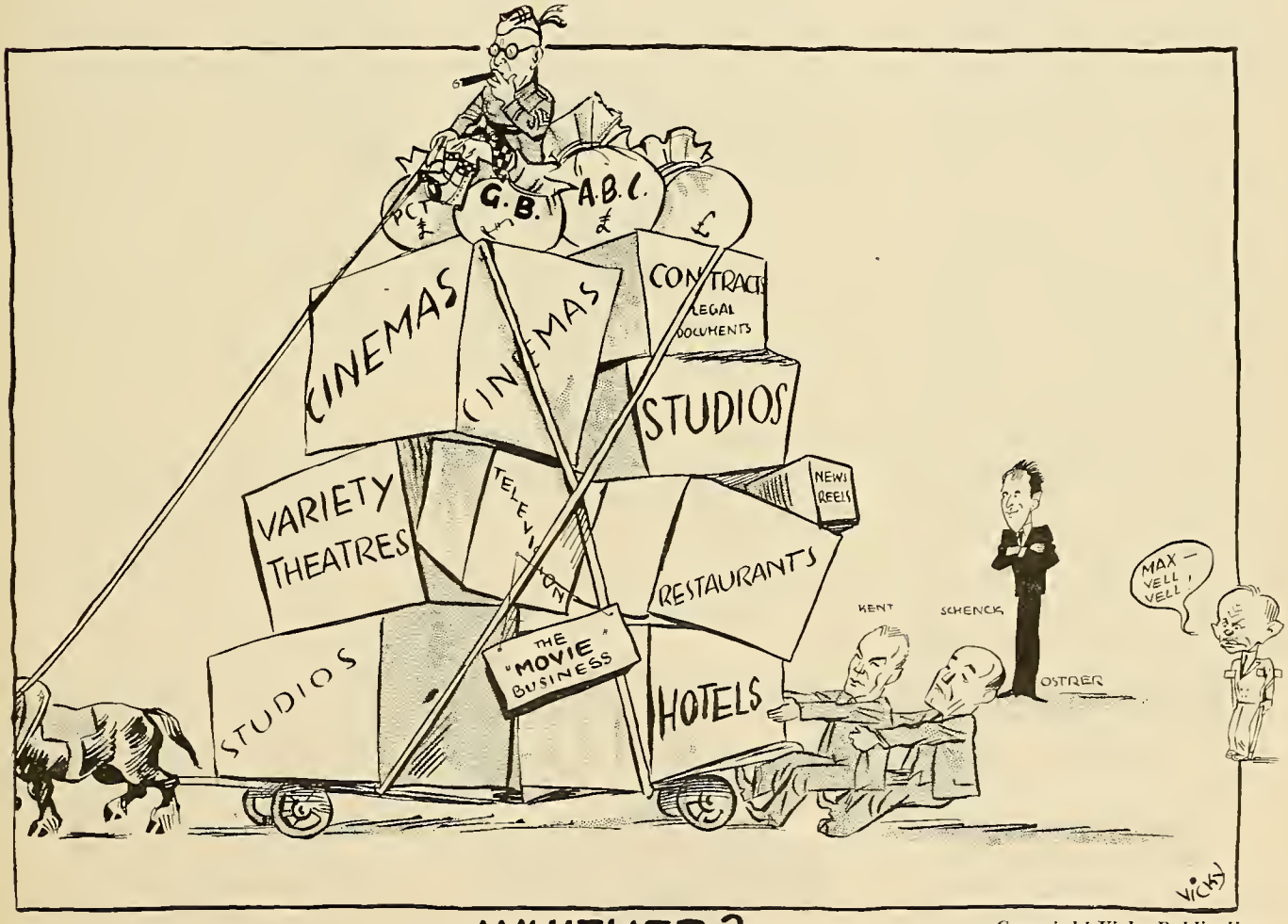
"*He told me that when he was making Rain he found Joan Crawford one day in a corner holding a baby slipper close against her. . . . She told him that she always carries this slipper when she is 'getting into the mood' for an emotional scene.*" (*Sunday paper*).

This is a very good example of psychology, children; a thing all stars have to carry in their make-up box. Why I know of one actor who can't do a thing without reciting *Enoch Arden* into a brass coal-scuttle left to him by his aunt Monica. And then there's that sweet actress who plugs her ears with melted barley-sugar and runs around the sound-booth crying, "I hate me, I hate me" before every scene. It's things like that which make us realise, do they not, that we must all of us keep a stiff upper lipstick.

Overheard at Denham

during a run through of *Elephant Boy*.

"H'm, we must have some sex appeal here—why is it always the same elephant?"



WHITHER?

Copyright Vicky Publications

French National Library Collects 4,000 Films

By Our Paris Correspondent

TWO JOURNALISTS on the staff of the weekly periodical *Cinématographie Francaise*, Henr-Langlois and Georges Franju, founded Cinémathèque Francaise, the new organisation which is to establish a national library of films. Its work corresponds to that of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The founders were assisted by the editor of their paper, Paul Auguste Harlé, who placed his own film library at their disposal and allowed them a budget of 6,000 francs a year. They have now formed an Association whose object is to collaborate with the owners of films. Among the founder members of the Association are Germaine Dulac, Jean Epstein, Jean Renoir, Jean Tedesco, Starevitch and Chataigner, the President of the French Film Press Association. These members have placed films at the disposal of the Cinémathèque. In some cases where it is not possible to acquire films, an arrangement is made with the owner to obtain prints from time to time and the latter is under an obligation to inform the Cinémathèque if he intends to dispose of the film and give them the first option on buying it. In most cases the films are handed over as a gift or loan. Exhibitions are not made for commercial purposes.

The Cinémathèque has collected 4,000 films of which 500 are full length pictures. Among these are *Trois Lumières* (Der Müde Tod) by Fritz Lang; Arthur Robinson's *Montreur d'Ombres*, *Chronik von Griehuis*; *Rail* by Lupu Pick; the old *Lucrece Borgia*; *Caligari*; the Russian films, *Potemkin*, *Mother*, *Storm Over Asia*, *Arsenal*, *Bed and Sofa*; the American films, *Way Down East*, *Birth of a Nation*, and many others. The Cinémathèque has managed to find nearly all lost films of Louis Deluc, old films of René Clair, Germaine Dulac, L'Herbier, Jean Epstein, Cavalcanti, Dreyer (Le Maître du Logis), Jean Renoir, Feyder, Duvivier, Robert Boudrioz, Feuillade, Nervil, Volkoff, Tourjansky, as well as the Starevitch films, Georg Melies films, Zecca, Ferand Leger, Emile Cohl, Jasset, Pouctal, Perret and Capellani pictures.

From an old film dealers was obtained Feyder's *Image*, a film believed to have been completely lost. Feyder's wife, hearing of the efforts to save the film, offered the necessary finance to do so.

In making the collection, the object of the founders is to obtain films of high quality and also films typical of a period. An average film and also a bad film of any one period are therefore selected, the latter, of course, showing certain trends of style.

Langlois and Franju are in touch with the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and they have exchanged twelve films with them. Now they are trying to organise a petition to the League of Nations to secure the abolition of all duties on Cinémathèque films, as has already been done for educational and instructional films. It is hoped, too, to publish an *avant garde* periodical to be called *Cinéma et Combat*.

* * *

JEAN ZAY, MINISTER of "Education Nationale" proposes to revise French copyright laws. This, of course, affects films and broadcasting. In his fifty-six articles dealing with the subject Zay indicates that copyright will be maintained for fifty years after the author's death. During the first ten years the heirs or legatees are to possess "droit moral" and "droit pecuniaire" of the works, but after that period the "droit moral" ceases, though they will continue to receive royalties. After the first ten years they will not have the rights over exploitation.

The situation over film copyright is more complicated, for Jean Zay will have to indicate who is the "author" of a film. Is it the scenario writer, the composer, the architect, the director, the cameraman or the producer? M. Zay speaks vaguely of one author only and seems unaware of this controversial point.

The old Chambre Syndicale de la Cinématographie Francaise believes the producer to be the author of a film. A Berlin law court thinks the scenario writer to be the sole author. A law court in a French town declares that the cutter who "puts the film together" must be called the author. The directors claim to be authors too!

However, film people are rarely interested in their films after two or three years, so they do not fear the limitation of the "droit moral."

* * *

A group of French exhibitors have formed an 'Association des Directeurs de Cinema du Front Populaire,' the purpose of which is said to be for securing action against films giving false or incomplete information to the masses and against fascist films. The Association intends to form a similar organisation for cinemagoers.

M. Marceau-Pivert, of the French Cabinet, has received representatives of this Association, and has assured them of the Government's interest in their efforts.

National Studios For Switzerland?

In January last a *commission fédéral d'étude* was appointed to elucidate in all its aspects the question of a Swiss film industry. The construction of studios and their importance to the country, both from the artistic and economic point of view, was included in the programme of work mapped out for this commission.

Five towns immediately became candidates for the studios: Montreux, Zurich, Basle, Lugano and Saint Gall.

Offers were received from foreign producers, including those in America, Germany and France, for renting periods. Two Swiss Societies were to be formed to produce several national films in French and German.

After six months, careful and detailed consideration of the question the Federal film commission presented its report to the Federal authorities and recommended that the moment was not ripe for the granting of a subvention by the Federal Government.

Since this decision both Montreux and Zurich have continued their efforts to prove that the proposition is economically sound. In this respect the Commercial Commission at Montreux states that the average number of full-length films produced in Europe every year is 600, and that to assure the rentability of the proposed studio it is only necessary that 1 per cent of the European production should be produced there. It has also pointed out that producers working at Montreux could do so at from 1,000 to 1,200 francs less per day than at Vienna, Berlin or Munich, and from 750 to 1,100 francs less per day than at Paris, where the cost of production has greatly increased in the past few months.

Other points which are being brought out in favour of the scheme are : the possibilities of disposing of a Swiss production; the economic and cultural advantages of a national industry, and the various benefits which would follow in its train.

It should be of interest to all film students and historians to know that the original negative of Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* has been found in Paris and has been carefully and reverently placed by its lucky owner in the newly organised Cinémathèque Francaise, along with many French negatives of great importance.

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FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Air Hoppers
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: David Doyle.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 9, 6 days

Aquatic Artistry
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: David Miller.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 30, 6 days

Austria Beautiful
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
CHOPPINGTON: Star Nov. 26, 3 days
LUTON: Wellington Nov. 2, 3 days
SALTCOATS: La Scala Nov. 9, 3 days

Beneath Our Feet
DISTRIBUTION: Ace. DIRECTION: Tracy and Horace Woodward.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 12, 3 days

Beside the Seaside
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson. DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.
BIRKENHEAD: Super Nov. 16, 6 days
CHEPSTOW: Palace Nov. 23, 3 days
CHIPPENHAM: Palace Nov. 23, 3 days
CINDERFORD: Palace Nov. 19, 3 days
CIRENCESTER: Picture House Nov. 23, 3 days
DUDLEY: Criterion Nov. 9, 3 days
EGREMONT: Gaumont Palace Nov. 9, 6 days
GRIMSBY: Savoy Nov. 9, 6 days
GUERNSEY: Lyric Nov. 30, 3 days
HUDDERSFIELD: Savoy Nov. 26, 3 days
ILFRACOMBE: Scala Nov. 30, 3 days
JERSEY: Opera House Nov. 16, 3 days
KETTERING: Electric Pavilion Nov. 2, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Corona Nov. 30, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Plaza Nov. 9, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Rivoli Nov. 30, 3 days
MONMOUTH: Picture House Nov. 16, 3 days
STOKE: Hippodrome Nov. 30, 6 days
TROWBRIDGE: Palace Nov. 19, 3 days
WIDNES: Co-op Cinema Nov. 5, 3 days

Bird Sanctuary
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 7
12 to 1 o'clock only

Blossom Time in Japan
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 30, 6 days

Born to Die
DISTRIBUTION: Ace. DIRECTION: Tracy and Horace Woodward.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 23, 3 days

Bouquet of Violets
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 16, 6 days

Bridge Builders
PRODUCTION: Oxford Group. DISTRIBUTION: Reunion.
BRIGHTON: Academy, West Street Nov. 9, 7 days

Cities of Wax
DISTRIBUTION: Ace. DIRECTION: Tracy and Horace Woodward.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 16, 3 days

City of Architecture
DISTRIBUTION: Fidelity. DIRECTION: Otto von Bothmen.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 23, 6 days

Coast Erosion
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 7
12 to 1 o'clock

Cock of the Walk
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists. PRODUCTION: Disney.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre. Nov. 5, 3 days

Cover to Cover
PRODUCTION: Strand Films. DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 9, 6 days

Elmer Elephant
A Walt Disney Colour Cartoon.
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 12, 3 days

Face of Britain Series
PRODUCTION: G.B.I. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.

Shipyard
OXFORD: Film Society, Scala Nov. 29, 1 day
PETERSFIELD: Savoy Nov. 9, 3 days
STEYNINGS: Village Hall Nov. 9, 6 days

This was England
CROYDON: Classic Nov. 5, 3 days
TRING: Regal Nov. 5, 3 days

Face of Britain
HAYLING ISLAND: Savoy Nov. 2, 3 days
MIDHURST: King Edward San Nov. 13, 1 day
TRING: Regal Nov. 26, 3 days

Citizens of the Future
HAYLING ISLAND: Savoy Nov. 5, 3 days
TRING: Regal Nov. 30, 3 days

Progress
CROYDON: Classic Nov. 15, 3 days
HAYLING ISLAND: Savoy Nov. 9, 3 days

Great Cargoes
HAYLING ISLAND: Savoy Nov. 19, 3 days

Fox Hunt
Colour Cartoon. DISTRIBUTION: London Films. PRODUCTION: Korda. DIRECTION: Hoppin, Gross and Meitner.
LONDON: Curzon Oct. 22–Nov. 30

Grain Harvests
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D. PRODUCTION: Gaumont British Instructional.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 21
12 to 1 o'clock only

Guatemala
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: James Fitzpatrick.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 30, 3 days

Harvest of the Soil
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 21
12 to 1 o'clock only

Herculaneum and Pompeii (Two Buried Cities)
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
EPSOM: Ebbisham Hall Nov. 8, 1 day
BATH: News Theatre Nov. 16, 3 days
BOURNEMOUTH: Premiere News Theatre
Nov. 16, 6 days
PETERSFIELD: Savoy Nov. 23, 3 days

Holland in Tulip Time
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: James Fitzpatrick.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 9, 3 days

Honolulu
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: James Fitzpatrick.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 23, 6 days

Industrial Scotland
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D. PRODUCTION: G.B.I.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 21
12 to 1 o'clock only.

Ireland
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: James Fitzpatrick.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 12, 3 days

Isle of Capri
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
SAXMUNDHAM: Playhouse Nov. 2, 3 days
NUNEATON: New Palace Nov. 9, 3 days
BRIGHTON: Princes, North Street Nov. 15, 7 days
LONDON: Sphere News Theatre Nov. 16, 3 days
TREORCHY: Park and Dare Workmen's Hall
Nov. 23, 6 days

The March of Time (second year, No. 4)
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 2, 6 days

The March of Time (second year, No. 5)
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 30, 6 days

Mediaeval Village
DISTRIBUTION: G.B. PRODUCTION: Gaumont-British Instructional.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 7
12 to 1 o'clock only.

Mickey's Grand Opera
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists. PRODUCTION: Disney.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 16, 3 days

Mickey's Man Friday
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists. PRODUCTION: Disney.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 30, 3 days

Mickey's Polo Team
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists. PRODUCTION: Disney.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 23, 3 days

Miracles of Nature Series
People of the Pond.
MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford St. Nov. 2, 6 days

Moving Day. (Mickey Mouse.)
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 23, 6 days

Mystery of Stonehenge
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
BATH: News Theatre Nov. 19, 3 days
POTTERS BAR: Ritz, Darkes Lane Nov. 26, 3 days
SAXMUNDHAM: Playhouse Nov. 9, 3 days

On Ice. (Mickey Mouse)
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 2, 3 days

Orphan's Picnic
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists. PRODUCTION: Disney.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 9, 3 days

Power in the Highlands
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford St. Nov. 30, 6 days

Propellors
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford St. Nov. 9, 6 days

Rural Mexico
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: James Fitzpatrick.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 9, 6 days

Song of Ceylon
DIRECTOR: Basil Wright. PRODUCTION: John Grierson.
BIRMINGHAM: Cadbury's Bournville Theatre
Nov. 17
OXFORD: Film Society Nov. 15
ILKSTON: New Theatre Nov. 9, 3 days

Stranger than Fiction
DISTRIBUTION: Universal
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 2, 3 days

Switzerland the Beautiful
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: James Fitzpatrick.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 2, 3 days

Tawny Owl
PRODUCTION: G.B. Instructional. DISTRIBUTION: G.B.
LONDON: Curzon All November

The Blowfly
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D. PRODUCTION: Gaumont-British Instructional.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 28
12 to 1 o'clock only

The Development of Railways
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 23, 6 days

The Immortal Swan (Pavlova)
MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford St. Nov. 2, 6 days

FILM GUIDE

Shorts (cont.)

The Frog
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D. PRODUCTION: Gaumont-British Instructional.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 28
12 to 1 o'clock only

The Life Cycle of a Plant
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D. PRODUCTION: Gaumont-British Instructional.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 28
12 to 1 o'clock only

The Old Mill Pond
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: Harman and Isin.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 9, 6 days

The Sea
DISTRIBUTION: Ace. DIRECTION: Tracy and Horace Woodward.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 5, 4 days

The Wayward Canary. (Mickey Mouse)
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 9, 6 days

The Winged Empress
DISTRIBUTION: G.F.D.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 23, 6 days

Three Little Wolves. (Walt Disney Colour Cartoon)
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 19, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford St. Nov. 2, 6 days

Thru' the Mirror. (Walt Disney)
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 2, 6 days

Town Settlement
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 7
12 to 1 o'clock only

Two Hundred Fathoms Deep
DISTRIBUTION: Ace.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 9. 3 days

Vale of White Horses
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
CHOPPINGTON: Star Nov. 26, 3 days

Water Power
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 21
12 to 1 o'clock only

Zeeland
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M. DIRECTION: James Fitzpatrick.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 19, 3 days

Zion
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
LONDON: Strand News Theatre Nov. 5, 3 days

Advertising Films

Black Diamonds
PRODUCTION and DISTRIBUTION: Publicity Films.
BRISTOL: Stoll Nov. 2, 6 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Regal Nov. 9, 6 days

See How They Won
DIRECTOR: . PRODUCTION: Revelation Films Ltd., for Boots Pure Drug Co., Ltd.
BIRMINGHAM: Warwick, Acocks St. Nov. 2, 6 days
Pavilion Nov. 2, 6 days
BLACKPOOL: Regent, Church Street Nov. 2, 6 days
GLASGOW: Commodore, Dumbarton Road Nov. 2, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Astoria, Walton Road Nov. 2, 6 days
Commodore Nov. 2, 6 days
Prince of Wales, Clayton Square Nov. 2, 6 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Haymarket Nov. 2, 6 days
NOTTINGHAM: Elite Nov. 2, 6 days
Rock Nov. 2, 6 days
BIRMINGHAM: Tivoli, Yardley Nov. 9, 6 days
Regal, Handsworth Nov. 9, 6 days
Beaufort, Ward End Nov. 9, 6 days
BLACKPOOL: Grand Nov. 9, 6 days
Palladium Nov. 9, 6 days
BRISTOL: Vandyck Nov. 9, 6 days
CARDIFF: Queen's Nov. 9, 6 days
LEEDS: Lounge, Headingley Nov. 9, 6 days
Tower, New Briggate Nov. 9, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Coliseum, Walton Nov. 9, 6 days
Coliseum, Paddington Nov. 9, 6 days
Olympia, West Derby Road Nov. 9, 6 days
Scala, Lime Street Nov. 9, 6 days
Futurist Nov. 9, 6 days
MANCHESTER: Victory Nov. 9, 6 days
Carlton, Clayton Nov. 9, 6 days
Gaiety, Peter Street Nov. 9, 6 days
La Scala, Oxford Rd. Nov. 9, 6 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: ElectricPalace Nov. 9, 6 days
NOTTINGHAM: New Empress Nov. 9, 6 days
SHEFFIELD: Hippodrome Nov. 9, 6 days
BIRMINGHAM: Northfield, BristolRd. Nov. 19, 3 days
Pavilion Nov. 16, 6 days
BLACKPOOL: Rendezvous Nov. 16, 6 days
CARDIFF: La Plaza Nov. 16, 6 days
EXMOUTH: Regal Nov. 16, 6 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Grainger Nov. 16, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Palais-de-Luxe, Lime St. Nov. 16, 6 days
MANCHESTER: Deansgate Nov. 16, 6 days
Alhambra, Openshaw Nov. 16, 6 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Regal Nov. 16, 6 days
SHEFFIELD: Electric Palace Nov. 16, 6 days
Scala Nov. 16, 6 days
BIRMINGHAM: Royalty, Harbourne Nov. 23, 6 days
Alhambra, Moseley Road Nov. 23, 6 days
BRIGHTON: Curzon Nov. 23, 6 days
CARDIFF: Pavilion Nov. 23, 6 days
MANCHESTER: King's Nov. 23, 6 days
Grosvenor Nov. 23, 6 days
SHEFFIELD: Globe Nov. 23, 6 days

The World Rolls On
PRODUCTION and DISTRIBUTION: Publicity Films.
LEICESTER: Trocadero Nov. 2, 6 days

Foreign Films

Bonne Chance (French)
DIRECTION: Sacha Guitry. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
CAMBRIDGE: Arts Theatre Nov. 9, 6 days
OXFORD: The Film Society Nov. 15, 1 day
SOUTHAMPTON: The Film Society Nov. 8, 1 day
TYNESIDE: The Film Society Nov. 22, 1 day

Episode (Walter Reisch. Vienna)
OXFORD: Scala Nov. 30, 6 days

Hauptmann von Koepenick
OXFORD: Scala Nov. 5, 3 days

In the Land of the Soviets
OXFORD: Scala Nov. 2, 3 days

Joan of Arc
DIRECTION: Ucicky.
OXFORD: Scala Nov. 9, 3 days

Marchand D'Amour
DIRECTION: Edmond Greville. STARRING: Jean Galland, Francois Rosay. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
DUNDEE FILM SOCIETY Nov. 15
GLASGOW FILM SOCIETY Nov. 22
HAMPSTEAD: Everyman Cinema Nov. 1
OXFORD FILM SOCIETY Nov. 29

Morgenrot
PRODUCTION: Gunther Stapenhorst. DISTRIBUTION: U.F.A.
OXFORD: Scala Nov. 12, 3 days

Papageno (Lotte Reiniger)
MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford Street Nov. 30, 6 days

Remous
DIRECTION: Edmond Greville. Starring Jean Galland, Jeanne Boitel. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
LONDON: Studio One Nov. 29, 6 days
MARGATE FILM SOCIETY Nov. 15,
OXFORD: Scala Nov. 16, 6 days

The Student of Prague (Austrian)
DIRECTOR: Arthur Robison. STARRING: Adolf Wohling, Dorethea Wieck. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
CAMBRIDGE: Arts Theatre Nov. 16, 3 days
GLASGOW FILM SOCIETY Nov. 1
HEREFORD FILM SOCIETY Nov. 13
OXFORD: Scala Nov. 23, 6 days

Under the Water (French)
DIRECTION: Marcel de Hubsch. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
CAMBRIDGE: Arts Theatre Nov. 9, 6 days
MARGATE FILM SOCIETY Nov. 15
ROCHDALE: Hippodrome Nov. 12, 3 days

Unfinished Symphony (Original German Version)
DIRECTOR: Willi Forst. STARRING: Hans Jaray, Marta Eggerth. DISTRIBUTION: Denning.
BRIGHTON: Regal, Western Road Nov. 22, 6 days

Feature Films

November Releases
DANCING PIRATE (Radio). DIRECTOR: Lloyd Corrigan. STARRING: Charles Collins, Steffi Duna.
EX-MRS. BRADFORD (Radio). DIRECTOR: Stephen Roberts. STARRING: William Powell.
FURY (M.G.M.). DIRECTOR: Fritz Lang. STARRING: Sylvia Sidney, Spencer Tracy.
MARY OF SCOTLAND (Radio). DIRECTOR: John Ford. STARRING: Katharine Hepburn, Fredric March.
POPPY (Paramount). DIRECTOR: A Edward Sutherland. STARRING: W. C. Fields.
PRINCESS COMES ACROSS (Paramount). DIRECTOR: William K. Howard. STARRING: Carole Lombarde, Fred Macmurray.
ROSE MARIE (M.G.M.). STARRING: Jeanette Macdonald.
SUTTERS GOLD (G.F.D.). STARRING: Edward Arnold.
THE MAN WHO CHANGED HIS MIND (Gaumont British). STARRING: Boris Karloff.
UNDER TWO FLAGS (Twentieth-Century Fox). STARRING: Ronald Colman, Claudette Colbert.

Book Review

TELEVISION AND SHORT-WAVE HANDBOOK by F. J. Camm. George Newnes. 3s. 6d.

Any work by F. J. Camm commands respect. As editor of a well-known wireless paper and as author of books on radio construction, he has probably done more than anyone in this country to stimulate the research by amateurs which has proved so valuable in the development of radio.

His new book on television serves a double purpose. Those with technical knowledge who need guidance on the mechanics of set construction will find it in copious diagrams and concise specifications; while those who want a straightforward exposition of how television works without having to master the mathematical symbolism beloved of the engineer will be well served by a simple and practical text. An excellent series of photographs, accompanied by notes, demonstrates the various troubles likely to occur in television reception, and prescribes remedies.

The book is divided into two parts. The first explains the principles of television, and the construction and operation of receivers; the second deals with short-wave and ultra-short-wave working, a branch of radio essential to television, and on which a great part of present research is concentrated. These sections, together with a summary of the 1935 Television Committee's Report, a list of short-wave transmitters all over the world, and a dictionary of technical terms, make a useful and sensible guide to a complex subject.

world FILM news

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AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

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VOL. 1 NO. 9 PRICE: ONE SHILLING DECEMBER 1936

I Live in a Small Town

By WINIFRED HOLMES

THERE are four cinemas in this southern town of twenty-two thousand people. Three of the four cinemas belong to a circuit—the fourth is independent. Two—the independent and one of the circuit's—are situated in the main shopping street of the town, the street of Marks & Spencer, Woolworth and other multiple stores. They cater for the working-class and their patrons come regularly twice a week whatever the film.

The other two bigger, more high-class houses stand in the fine old High Street, shouldered by long-established "good" shops. They attract the richer patrons not only from the town but from the residential sections outside. These patrons come because they wish to see a particular film and are not to be counted upon as regular attenders.

To the patrons of the smaller houses the local cinema is a club. They attend as a matter of course. Yet they are not undiscriminating, and will walk out if they don't like a film—it's just that they enjoy going to a familiar place. The managers of these two cinemas have to study the taste of their patrons very carefully.

Let us call the cinemas the Regal, the Majestic, the Grand and the Plaza. The Regal is the biggest and most luxurious and we will visit it first. Its seating capacity is 1,460 and its prices range from 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* It runs continuous performances and, in common with the other local houses, has a double-feature programme. Only when a long film like *Mutiny on the Bounty* is shown can a short creep in. Audiences which are "select" enjoy an occasional interest short. This cinema has the only organ in the town and visiting organists come each week to give variety to its programmes. Their performances are very much enjoyed and applauded. One patron remarked that she "wouldn't go to a cinema without an organ if she could help it."

The worst night for attendances at the Regal is Friday. Saturday does most business and on Sunday there is the biggest rush. This is because local ruling has it that cinemas cannot open till 7 p.m., so the queues mount up and trail round the corner. "It's the busiest hour in the week," said the Manager, "no one likes waiting and we have to issue tickets and bundle them in in double quick time . . . we dread Sunday evenings!"

Second change of programme occurs in the middle of the week, but a specially good film will run the whole week. Patrons of the Regal and Majestic do not express their opinions of the films to the managers as do the Grand and Plaza audiences. Increase or falling-off of box-office returns are the means of judging audience reactions in their case. These show rapidly enough for an unpopular film to be taken off after a couple of days and another substituted. Often titles mislead people. *Petticoat Fever*, the Regal's manager thinks, is a first-rate film hidden under a bad title.

"What do you consider to have the greatest drawing powers?" I asked him. "Stars or stories? English or American films?"

"Definitely stars: Shirley Temple, Charles Laughton, Myrna Loy, George Arliss and now Robert Donat are the biggest draws here. But I'm afraid George Arliss is losing much of his popularity because lately he's been in such poor films. American films are more popular than English ones on the whole because of their excellent technique and built-up star system. But British stars are beginning to come into their own, and good British films like *Rhodes of Africa*, *The Thirty-nine Steps* and *The Ghost Goes West* have been a great success."

"What types of story do your patrons like best on the whole?"

"They enjoy musicals—*Limelight* had a marvellous success here—and thrillers, but not horror films. *Rome Express* was very popular. Historical films are all right occasionally, but we've had far too many lately. Modern witty sophisticated drama appeals more to our patrons. *Desire*, *Wife v. Secretary*, *My Man Godfrey*—that type of film."

The Majestic is like the Regal on a smaller scale. It seats 650 people; prices are the same; and the same type of patron visits it. The local theatre converted, it has a prominent position in the town and attracts motorists passing through. Musicals are its special feature. In every other respect what goes for the one also goes for the other. We must walk across to another part of the town to the Grand and Plaza before getting different patrons and different tastes.

The Grand, opposite Woolworth's, is also a circuit cinema, but wisely has a different policy from the Regal and Majestic. It seats 755 people and its prices start at 5*d.* and go up by small degrees to 2*s.* 0*d.* Its regular patrons are the working-class who shop in the district and don't want to bother to go further for their twice-weekly entertainment.

The programme is changed regularly twice a week and consists of two features, a G.B. newsreel and an interest film or comedy, usually Mickey Mouse. "Pop-eye" has been tried lately but with less success except for the children, who love the sailor-man.

Sunday, Thursday and Saturday are the Grand's best evenings; curiously enough Wednes-

day, early closing, is poorly attended. The street is almost empty and the usual shoppers go off by bus to have a spree in a neighbouring big town. Tuesday is the worst night in the week for some mysterious reason, while Monday is fair. In the summer time and fine weather attendance falls off perceptibly as there are many outdoor amusements in the locality.

Regular patrons take a lot of pleasing and are always ready to give their views on a film to the manager. One old lady of 92 goes twice a week and sits each time at the end of a row of seventeen seats. The attendants have to be very tactful when filling up the other sixteen as she loudly resents people passing in front of her!

The Grand's manager considers that it is the women who dictate the taste of his patrons. "What pleases the women pleases the men," he tells me; "they read the papers and know all about what they are going to see, and they make up their minds beforehand as to whether they are going to enjoy the programme or not. American films are most popular; so many British ones are too la-di-da and up-stage for then. Musical comedy is the best bid and I must say that Jessie Matthews and Gracie Fields are among the greatest draws. Jack Hulbert, Cecily Courtneidge and Charles Laughton are other popular British stars. Shirley Temple tops the list for American stars, then comes Wallace Beery, the Marx Brothers, and Laurel and Hardy. Boris Karloff is very popular too—they love his horror films."

"Did you show *Turn of the Tide*."

"Yes, and it went down very well indeed. Although the working-class love to see luxury and American 'high-life' on the screen, they very much appreciate films of simple folk whose lives they can understand. I wish more would be made."

Immediately across the road is the Plaza, the only independent cinema in the place. Although it has the disadvantage of having a poor entrance it is roomy inside and holds 633 people. It has had various vicissitudes since it was changed from a skating-rink to a Salvation Army hall and then to a cinema, and was, as its new proprietors say, "a regular flea-pit" when they took it over six months ago. Now they have built up a substantial regular clientele of the working-class and are doing well.

The prices range from 5*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*, and finding the soldiers from the barracks couldn't afford to go often, they have regimental nights at special rates. The unemployed, of whom there are several hundred in the town, also get in more cheaply. On Saturday afternoons a group of gipsies come in as a regular thing for the 2.30 matinée. Saturday is a busy day. The children have a morning programme; in the afternoon shoppers from the outlying country districts fill the cinema and there are always full houses at night.

"Do you reckon to please the men or the women in your audience?" I asked.

"The men. They are very obstinate in this town, I find, and if they want to see a film which their wife doesn't, they just come in and let her go elsewhere! They let us know pretty quickly too if they don't like a film. There's one old boy who comes twice a week regularly and always seeks one of us out at the end of the programme to tell us what he thought of it. We go on his opinion sometimes, but judge more by the reactions of the people in the hall. For instance when we put on one particular film people began coming out one by one till the house was almost empty. We put on another film next day!"

"What draws your patrons most?"

"Stars first, then titles. Karloff is the biggest draw here, then comes Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, then Gracie Fields and George Formby. And of course the cowboy actors, Buck Jones, Gene Autry, Tom Wayne and Tom Tyler. Society drama and sex pictures fail utterly here. We showed *The Man Who Pawned his Soul*, and were told that our patrons wouldn't come any more if we put on films of that sort. Action, horror, low-brow comedy and musicals, if not too elaborate, are what we go for here."

"We often book a film because its title will draw. . . . *Werewolf of London*, *House of Fate*, *Sabotage*, *Hard-rock Harrigan* are titles with sure-fire drawing power. Oh, and another popular star is R. E. Jeffrey of the Universal News! Our patrons laugh at him and like him enormously."

"Do you ever show any shorts?"

"Only when there is a little time to fill up. I wish we could always show one. *Colour Box* we put on as an experiment, and though they didn't 'know what it was all about,' they loved it. *Scotland* won a good deal of applause and so did *A Day in the Life of a Dog*. Travel shorts are popular but there is seldom time in a double-feature programme for them. And our clientele thinks if they don't have a double feature they're not getting their money's worth. We show the 'March of Time' and the G.B. Magazine, chiefly because we think them excellent ourselves!"

"From now until Christmas our houses fall off appreciably in spite of bad weather. The reason is that people are saving up for their winter clubs. They come once a week, for instance, instead of twice."

Conclusions

This survey has brought out the following facts and conclusions:

That the middle- and working-classes in a small town go to different cinemas as a general rule.

That the middle-classes go for the film first and foremost, while the working-class rather as a regular habit, looking on the cinema in their district as a kind of club.

That the tastes of the two sections of the public differ; the working-class liking comedians better than the others and enjoying horror films almost exclusively.

That newspaper reviews of films are read with interest and play a large part in influencing people of all classes in their appreciation of the films shown.

That interest and documentary shorts would be more widely popular if room could be found for them in a double feature programme.

That two features are demanded by all sections of a small town audience.

Note.—The photograph at the head of this article (on p. 3) is of the Regal Cinema, Stirling (Manager, James S. Nairn) but this was chosen as a random example and is not among the cinemas discussed.

Meetings and Acquaintances

Innocent passers-by who evaded the vigilance of storm-troopers were recently surprised to see **DEGRELLE**, Belgium's Rexist leader delivering a fiery ovation in one of Brussels' squares to an audience consisting exclusively of himself. French newsreel men were making a film of Degrelle addressing the masses. The masses were to be inserted later!

MARY CLARE, the leading lady of Rodney Ackland's *After October*, at the Aldwych Theatre, is one of the stars of *The Mill on the Floss*, now being made at Sound City. She is one of the few stage actresses whose style of acting is as effective before the camera as it is in the theatre. It is probably because she is not an actress whose success reacts upon certain fascinating inflections of voice or some particularly characteristic gesture, which, though effective behind the footlights is only irritating and artificial before the camera. Like Flora Robson she is an actress who changes her skin at will. Talking of recent films, Miss Clare finds *Mayerling* one of the most interesting. She considers that pace and precision is one of the most important things in the making of historical films and that without it they appear artificial and stilted. Of the theatre, she agrees with Noel Coward who says that a run of two months is long enough for any play if the actors are never to become stale in their parts. In her spare time, Miss Clare collects old furniture and studies psychic phenomenon.

GEORGIUS, the French Ernie Lotinga, was adopted a few years ago by a group of intellectuals, who went to see his plays in Paris, knew all his songs, and admired their author's imagination, versatility, and his manner of presenting them to the public.

However, Georgius made low-class films which even his most enthusiastic friends could not support.

Now Georgius has just achieved a tremendous box-office success. *L'Atelier*, under Charles Dullin's management, has given him the chief rôle in C. Vitrac's new play, *Le Camelot*, where his style of delivery and brilliant acting bring him to the front rank of French comedians.

We hope that he will now make films which come up to his own standard.

EDITORIAL

Interview with Matthew Arnold

THERE HAS BEEN a great outcry over a speech by Mr. Alistair Cooke, the B.B.C. critic, to a group of exhibitors. Mr. Cooke seems to have committed the cardinal sin of "telling the trade its business" and of setting it values somewhat other than those now commonly pursued by the caterers of entertainment. We like the outcry, and compliment Mr. Fredman, of the *Daily Film Renter*, on the rudest piece of journalism since the early days of the *Denver Post*.

Behind the row, however, is an issue of importance. *Renter* questions the right of the critic to "rove all over the face of the hemisphere." The *Cinema* draws attention to the hundreds of people economically involved in the making of a film and asks the direct question: "Is it the duty of the critic to impress his private outlook on the world or is it rather to interpret to the world the outlook of the people whose work he is reviewing?"

Interviewing a certain Mr. Matthew Arnold on the subject, we find that he has a great deal to say about this relation between the critic and the practitioner.

"The rules of criticism may be given in one word: by being *disinterested*; by keeping aloof from practice; by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches; by steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior practical considerations about ideas, which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by, in its own turn, making this known to create a current of new and fresh ideas.

"The business of the critic is to do this with inflexible honesty; but his business is to do no more, and to leave alone all questions of practical consequences and applications, questions which will never fail to have due prominence attached to them.

"For what is the bane of criticism in this country? It is that practical considerations cling to it and stifle it. It is because criticism has so little detached itself from practice that it has so ill accomplished in this country its best work, which is to keep men from a self-satisfaction which is retarding and vulgarising." At this point Mr. Arnold mentions no names but he looks hard, so to speak, at the *Daily Film Renter*.

"The rush and roar of practical life," adds this Mr. Arnold, "will always have its dizzying and attractive effect on the most collected spectator and tend to draw him into the vortex; most of all will this be the case where that life is so powerful as in the cinema. But it is only by remaining collected and refusing to lend himself to the point of view of the practical man, that the critic can do the practical man any service, and it is only by the greatest sincerity in pursuing his own course and by at last convincing even the practical man of his sincerity, that he can escape the misunderstandings which perpetually threaten him."

Remembering the high words of Mr. Fredman, "threaten" would seem to be *mot juste*. Mr. Cooke may, on consideration, prefer to reserve his answer and leave the matter between the Messrs. Fredman and Arnold. We assure the Kentucky Colonel that he will find his opponent a veritable Horseman of the Apocalypse.

Korda and the Big Time

AT NO POINT in his spectacular English career has Mr. Korda, the producer of London Films, been so much under discussion as now. But the line of the discussion is different. Two years ago he represented the new cinema that was to come to England and the light of a great promise shone round his Hungarian head. To-day his friends are on the defence and, with them, that rich vision of the British cinema for which he stood.

The first and most important implication of the recent financial criticisms of our film affairs, is that there will presently be a drive to cut down costs. We make no complaint. Extravagance is rampant in the studios. Effects are wasted and salaries are often stupidly high. Amateurism, inefficiency, nepotism and racketeering steal both time and money and frequently make a farce of what should be the relatively smooth process of producing films. But to attack extravagance is one thing, to destroy ambition is another. We fear that the efficiency movement may not draw the distinction.

The risk in making ambitious films is a very considerable one for England. The home market is small. It is not sufficient to return with any certainty the cost of a film like *Henry VIII*, and it is incapable of returning the cost of *Mutiny on the Bounty*. The foreign market is in American hands. Counsels of prudence will inevitably suggest that we shape our costs to the certainty of the home market. Forty thousand pounds a picture may become the order of the day.

We have no sympathy with the lunatics who have wasted money in England's gold rush, but we are afraid lest a premium be put on the canny mind and the petty project. With the adventurous lies our only chance of matching the American and hitting the wider audiences of the world. We hope a measure of support will remain with them and particularly with Mr. Korda.

He has made mistakes. He has turned enthusiasm into promises and forgotten his promises. He has backed his star more heavily than a wise producer should; for box-office success is a will o' the wisp and it is not always that good film and good money come together. He has dispersed his energies in an impossible medley of producing, directing, financing and organising. He has tried the curious task of building Rome, more or less single-handed, in a day. But this strange figure does represent the one thing that is most precious to the British cinema, and more precious to the business of it than anything the Geddes axemen will be able to pretend. He represents quality and the big time.

Television— already a medium

WITH THE BRITISH FILM in the doldrums, it is some satisfaction to know that our television is the best in the world. So at least it would appear from the comments of those observers from Germany and the United States who watched the experimental transmissions. Everyone is astonished at the progress made. Matters of definition and size seem little enough. They will improve. The main thing is that the image is conveyed and television lives not as an experiment or as a toy but already as a medium.

There has been one immediate discovery. The actuality element is in the ascendant. Television takes over from radio the intimacy and the excitement of direct observation and, in this respect, cuts right away from an identity with film. Television is a process not of looking-at but of looking-in. Where, as in the example of the television film, *Television Comes to London*, comparison is sought with the cinema, television is poor thin-blooded stuff and does not compare. But where, as in the example of the direct television of a lesson in golf, television is its own radio self, no brilliant film by Bobby Jones and M.G.M. combined can match the atmosphere of personal tuition.

By all accounts the B.B.C. has been much troubled at the thought of programme material. If it has been thinking of the prices it must pay for film, it can cease to worry. Television has the whole world of actuality to play with—of affairs, people, events. There are a thousand and one occasions for personal tuition and a million and one sights to see. When these are done with there will no doubt be more.

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Three Stars Want a Change

1. ROLAND YOUNG

"Bored with film-making—tired of being the faithful friend"

Four tired men and a girl trudged up the rocks to the mountain top, and stood there panting in the hot sunlight of the Kleigs.

Paul Robeson's mouth moved. His voice filled the studio—from the sound track already recorded.

"Take 6," said someone. The little party climbed down from the rocks.

"One more," said Bob Stephenson.

"It was my fault," explained Paul, aside, to Anna Lee and Roland Young. Roland smiled wearily. "Ur," he said.

They trudged up the wooden ramp behind the rocks again. Paul Robeson sang a duet with himself—it's easier to sing than to move your lips in time to the song, and the studio might as well have a treat.

"Mighty mountain . . ." the voice died away. "Mark it," cried a voice.

Completely bored, Mr. Roland Young shook hands with me. "Sorry to interrupt you while you're working," I apologised.

"Ur," said Mr. Young politely, stroking a disreptuable growth of beard. Golden-haired Anna studied her (mechanical) wind-blown tresses in a mirror, tried to reach Robeson's bass notes, trickled a laugh.

"Ur—ur," said Mr. Young, indicating that I was to follow him, cast a lingering eye on slim Anna's trousered allure, and gracefully urred me into the lift.

"Feel like a heroine of Victorian musical comedy with this," he sighed, swinging the beribboned panama of Commander Good, of *King Solomon's Mines*.

We found his dressing room and he threw himself on the settee, with a new "ur"—of relaxation.

The Young monocle remained in his eye.

When he had made hospitable gestures I tried to penetrate the reserve of "urs." It was difficult. Not that Roland Young is either impolite or unintelligent. It is just in my opinion (and if I wrong my usually elegant friend I apologise for translating his "ur" language without a full and complete understanding of it)—he is utterly bored with film-making, and, as he put it, with "always being the faithful friend."

Filming is just part of his job, a business to be got through. There may be interest in it, but never glamour. That is why he arranges his life, as far as possible to a schedule, dividing his time between Hollywood, England, and New York.

"New York—I do a play every year," he told me, becoming quite intelligible. "That's great fun. Less money, of course, but fun.

"No, I never play in Hollywood. Place won't stand a run."

I asked him if he found much difference between working here and in Hollywood. He shrugged.

"Difference of national temperament," he murmured. "Otherwise all studios—ur—much the same. Better technicians, mostly, in Hollywood. They've had the years to learn. Still—good ones here—big improvements since I last came over three years ago—then they used to try and do two pictures on the floor at once—chaos.

"It's an insane life," he told me. "Ten hours a day of it—can't make dates . . ." he caught my grin and went on hastily, ". . . ur, dinner . . . theatre dates. Excuse me," he added as the telephone rang.

There were two telephones. He picked up the wrong one, smiled apologetically, picked up the other, put the first receiver down on the second hook, smiled again, murmured, "I feel like an executive with two telephones," and urred gently into both telephones.

We talked about the film he was doing for Gaumont British. "A fine director, Stephenson," he told me, emphasising the fact that a director can make or mar a film.

"Does he mean so much to really experienced artists?" I asked.

Roland Young frowned at my ignorance. "Good lord, yes," he said. "An artist can't see himself as the camera sees him. He can only give his interpretation of the part, then it's up to the director to make suggestions, and a good artist follows them out.

"That's one difference between a good director and a bad one," he went on, "the good one makes suggestions, the bad one bullies."

"Did you find the general studio atmosphere more regimental in Hollywood, or over here?" I asked.

"Yes," he said vaguely.

The telephone rang again. Roland picked the right one. "Stage," he explained.

He put the receiver down amongst the collection of penguins on his dressing-table, noted my glance, and became voluble on the subject of penguins. He has nearly a thousand, in wood, pottery, ivory, stone, at his New York apartment.

He knows all about them, their habits, even, I suspect, their language. He has confounded Zoo keepers with his intimate knowledge of penguin life, and when in London he always calls on the King Penguin at the Zoo.

And I am sure his mind was with the happy penguins who know no takes and re-takes, and mikes and babies and dollies, as he wandered boredly on to the set again, assuring me, with a quantity of urs what a pleasure it had been to have such an interesting—ur—conversation.

By Denis Myers

2. LILLI PALMER

Refuses to be a mediocrity

3. MARJORIE MARS

Wants to learn screen technique in America

Lilli Palmer

LOVELY LILLI PALMER spoke an epitaph: "All these pretty little girls . . . hoping . . . believing . . . that they will make a name on the films. And where do they end? In the cutting room."

She leaned forward and fixed me with big, blue-green eyes. "Do you think," she asked, earnestly, "that's what will happen to me?"

I reassured her. I had seen some of her work.

Lilli, twenty-one, Viennese, with a faint and charming accent, is more than just another blonde. She has—and only two very overworked words will fill the bill—glamour and personality.

She is alive, electric: she bites at the apple of life as eagerly as at the apples on which she almost entirely lives.

In the naughty evening gown she had worn on the cabaret set of *Good Morning, Boys*, she curled up in her dressing room armchair, and I heard the "long, long thoughts of youth . . ."

(Certificate "U," by the way, for we were duly chaperoned by Gainsborough's perfect executive, trying her best to look Amazonian, and only succeeding in looking attractively severe, or severely attractive.)

"I won't be a mediocrity," Lilli told me. "Once I wanted to be a sculptress. But I saw I could never get to the top. So. . . Oh, yes," she smiled, "just another of these young actresses, you are thinking. Please——" Lilli clasped her hands, "don't think I imagine I'm Dietrich or Bergner. But if I can contribute something towards those at the top, I'll be satisfied."

Lilli probably will. She takes her work very seriously. When they were making *Barrier*, at Gaumont British, she used to beg to be allowed to see the rushes, not once, but five or six times.

"Then I could say to myself, 'Lilli, you were awkward here; there, you looked all wrong'; and I could improve on it next time."

Lilli, who learned acting at the same school as Bergner and Louise Rainer, now wants a part she can "get her teeth into."

"Always I am to play just the bad girl," she said. "I have stolen husbands, jewels, papers, and now the Mona Lisa! In the *Barrier* picture I was a money-sucker—is that the word?"

"It's a good expression," I assured her.

Lilli thinks we could do with better stories in films. They should be slices of real life, not theatrical. But she likes the film work better than her other experience, of which she has had plenty.

She has played musical comedy, Shakespeare, Shaw. She has sung in the cabarets of Montmartre. And she made her first stage appearance upside down.

Standing on her head, she caught her first view of an audience wrong way up—just as her first "blue-green-eye-view" of the world was equally unusual—through the windows of a railway carriage, for she was born in the Berlin-Vienna express.

She speaks three languages—as well as American—and, as I saw her dance her way on to the set, as the director's whistle blew and she waved me goodbye, I thought of yet another language she speaks—the international language of screen artistry.

* * *

MARJORIE MARS, red-haired, rather adorably freckled, sat in a corner of the Soho café and stuck imaginary pins into imaginary effigies of (British) film directors.

"They're so obsessed with round faces," she said sadly. "They haven't realised as Hollywood has, that you can photograph the other sort attractively."

I looked over the rim of the coffee cup to the perfect line-modelling of the "other sort."

Marjorie has made a name for herself on the stage—but that, she told me, means nothing in the film world.

"I don't mind that," she told me. "I don't mind playing 'bits' as a beginner—but when you get directors who can't even tell you what they want you to do, well . . . !

"I know how to get my stage effects," she said, "but I want to be taught how to get them on the screen."

Rebel Marjorie wants to go to America. "There's something," she said, "about every artist who's been there. They come back with some different polish—that you can't seem to get over here.

"It may be the influence of American technique: I don't know. It's not just the sophistication of travel. One goes to the Continent, and comes back without it.

"Direction in America must be well worth experiencing," she said. "Look at all the children on the American films, and then at these on the British screen.

"You can't tell me," she went on, "that American children are any cleverer or better actors than English ones. What is it, then? It's the direction."

Marjorie, slim and quite lovely, got up. She had a date—not surprisingly.

"I'm afraid I've been rather sweeping," she said. "You know, I have played some good film parts and I have had some good directors. But you asked me to 'grouse,' from the artist's side.

"Besides, I want to do bigger things . . . I want . . . ."

"I know," I said, but with memories of Marjorie in the *Silver Cord* and *The Barretts*. I knew, too, that very soon an enterprising casting director will spot Marjorie in one of those films she has just made, and then Hollywood will say: "Freckles—we never knew they could be so attractive! Figure—Oh, boy! The Hepburn line of jaw with a new tenderness. . . . And can that girl act!"

Marjorie doesn't need to be wished good luck: her No. 3 pumps are already stepping up to the topmost rungs of the success ladder.

WHAT THE CHILDREN SAY TO WAR

From "On With Life"—(Putchstein)

By Frederick Evans, M.A.

In a Thames-side town where the munition factories are working to the limit, schoolchildren were shown films which were used as official propaganda in the Great War. They cheered the generals and laughed at the wounded. But subsequent tests brought very different reactions. The Film Council here publishes a full report of the experiment by the district Director of Education.

IN THE PRESS there frequently appear letters and articles which express concern as to the effect of war films, pageants, military reviews and tattoos, etc., upon child opinion regarding war and peace. There are usually two diametrically opposed views on the question. Some see in the newsreels and films of naval and military reviews a sinister attempt to make us militaristic in the aggressive sense or to produce attitudes favourable to war. Others hold that these spectacles are interesting as spectacles only and do not feed fuel to the combative tendencies which may be present in man.

Clearly only an objective study of child opinion in relation to war films and the like would be of any value in this controversy. For the last fifteen years or so the schools, encouraged by the teachers' associations, by the education authorities and by the Board of Education, have been directing their curricula towards the growth of knowledge about the world as a community with the effect, it was hoped, of producing a basis of opinion favourable to the collective system of organising for world peace. It would be of interest to discover how far in Britain this new trend in education for a changing world would offer resistance to other ideas that might be engendered by films and pageantry connected with war and warlike preparations.

Two investigations have recently been carried out to obtain some objective evidence on this point. In one of them films were used as the test material. The films used were official films of the war taken about 1916 and 1917, which were extensively shown during the Great War in public cinemas in England with the view of encouraging the *morale* of the people in support of a strenuous prosecution of the war to a successful conclusion. These films, whilst showing the more respectable horrors of war, were in fact propaganda for those times. They showed the Battle of the Somme, operations in the Near East, and also Naval and Air Force activities.

These were shown to four hundred boys and girls in Central Schools* who were round about thirteen years of age. No comment on the films previous to the showing or afterwards was made by the teachers to the children concerned. The enquiry was directed to find out whether the teaching in the schools in support of the idea of a world community could withstand the effect of the films, which were propaganda during the war. No control tests were made as would have been necessary in a more detailed investigation. It was felt that the work of the schools in this connection was very well known, so that tests, after seeing the films only, were made in order to discover whether there was any general pro-war tendency in the children's opinions after seeing the propaganda films.

The immediate reactions of the children as they viewed the films were to peace lovers apparently disquieting. The children cheered the men "going over the top" in the Somme Battle, some of them laughed at the limping, blinded "walking wounded." The generals, admirals, airmen and the great battleships all came in for hearty cheers. Pressmen who were present gave their opinions in their reports that "the children would go to war to-morrow joyfully."

The tests reflected quite another attitude. The cheering of things which were to the children cinematic did not mean that they wished these conditions to come again and to apply to them. Laughter at grotesque wounded was really an "escape mechanism" rather than a lack of sympathy. The real and considered opinions of the children were those given in their replies to the two questionnaires set them one immediately or soon after the films were viewed and the other a few days later. Perhaps the simplest way of giving an analysis of the children's replies will be in the following tabular form:

QUESTIONNAIRE PAPER 1.

You have seen films and pictures which were actually taken during the Great War of 1914–1918. If you remember what you saw in these pictures and what you thought about them, you will be able to answer these questions:—

Question 1: *What do you think of War?*

	Replies favourable to War	*Replies against War*	*Indefinite*
Total	1	381	1

These figures need no comment.

Question 2: *Would you like to see another coming?*

	Yes	*No*	*Indefinite*
Total	1	382	0

In spite of the "propaganda" value of the films seen here is a devastating reply to the suggestion that the children cheer war scenes because they want war, and would welcome war. The same girl gave answers favourable to war in both Questions 1 and 2.

Question 3: *What do you think ought to be done?*

Main types of Reply	*Total*
Disarmament, Reduction and Control of Arms	123
League of Nations	122
Arbitration, Conference, Treaty	85
"Keep the Peace"	54
Fraternity, Thought, etc.	39
International Police Force or Joint Force	28
Indefinite—Anti-War	21
Pro-War	2
Pacifist View	17
"Try and Stop It"	14
"Prepare for War to Keep Peace"	15
Religious Action	4
"Show War Horrors"	4
Establish World Courts of Law	4
"Those who make it, fight it"	4
Fight	3
"Economic Boycott"	3
World Empire	3
Destroy Dictators	2

Significant features of the figures in the analysis of these replies to Question 3, Paper I, is the high scoring of the idea of "Disarmament" in an area interested in the manufacturing of munitions like Erith. Another feature is, whilst there is some support to the idea of an International Police Police Force, the necessary corollary of a World Court of Justice is almost uncanvassed. This is an omission in the discussion of the problem which clearly needs remedying. A feature, too, of the figures is the low frequency of replies indicating belief in religious methods of combating the idea of war. Are the wars of religion in the school text books partly responsible for this?

* Erith, Kent.

Question 4: *If England went to War with another Country, what would you do—if you were grown up?*

Affirmative Replies: (Would render assistance):—	
Unconditionally	266*
If Conscripted	16
If Cause Just	17
Would serve as Non-Combatant	10
Total	309

* This figure includes certain girls twice over, under heads both of Munitions and Nursing.

Indefinite Replies:	
Would Advocate Peace	89
Would Carry on	9
Would Fly for Safety	19
Would help Suffering People	16
Total	133

Negative Replies: Would not render assistance.	
Complete Negative	20
Conscientious Objections	12
Total	32

These figures show a majority in favour of co-operation in the event of the emergency of war, yet a total of 208, between one-third and one-half, are in fact against unquestioning co-operation.

The figures also seem to show that the idea of national loyalty is well established, but that it is hoped it will never demand the sacrifice of war. Such expressions in affirmative replies as the following were frequent: "I would fight in defence of my country, but with the League of Nations (or arbitration, or common sense) it ought not to be necessary." An interesting fact is that all twenty who gave completely negative answers were boys.

QUESTIONNAIRE PAPER II.

Question 1: *Here are a number of adjectives, some of which describe War, and some do not. Cross out those which do not.*

Remaining Words	*Total*
Horrible	380
Dreadful	362
Wicked	354
Savage	333
Foolish	285
Useless	280
	1,994
Heroic	182
Thrilling	59
Glorious	9
Wise	9
Splendid	4
	263

The "anti-war" words score heavily against the "pro-war" words. "Heroic" is neutral. War can be heroic, but clearly there is not present the general opinion that it should be conducted in order to give opportunities for heroism.

Question 2: *Can you think of a good reason for going to War?*

	Total
Affirmative Replies	165
Negative Replies	211
	376

Main Types of Reason given	*Total*
Affirmative.	
Defence	76
To stop Aggressor	23
To increase Employment in Munitions	20
Conquest	17
To demonstrate the Foolishness of War	16
To defend Treaties	8
To settle Disputes	8
To encourage Heroism	8
"To make for Unity"	5
To enforce Peace	4
To give Discipline	4
To protect Trade	4
	193
Negative.	
Waste of Life and Treasure	29
Too Stupid	12
Why not Arbitrate?	5
Too Horrible	2
	48

(The negative answers were generally a plain NO.)

In this case many of the children seem to have been misled by the form of the question. They have in their replies to this query, attempted to find reasons because they concluded from the form of the question that they were bound to find reasons, although large numbers qualify their positive reasons for example, by saying, "I can only think that going to war is right when you have to defend yourself from attack—but with arbitration it ought not to be necessary."

Even so, a majority of answers quite definitely in the negative was obtained. Few children emphasised the idea of "good" in the sense of morally "good." It was clear that the causes of wars in history were in some of the children's minds when answering this question.

Question 3: *What do you think you will remember best of all the things you saw of the films and pictures of war that you have seen?*

Four little boys, eight or nine years old, dropped into a branch library over in the neighbourhood of Hell's Kitchen the other afternoon, and requested the attendant to read them an adventure story. She amiably selected a pirate story from the shelves and started in. It turned out that this particular book began with a great deal of verbose description, so she asked her audience if they didn't want her to skip that part and get into the more exciting passages.

"Sure," one of the little boys said, with enthusiasm. "We want plenty of hot lead."

The New Yorker, September 26th

Main Types of Answer	*Total*
Dead, Wounded, Horrors, etc.	175
"Going over the Top"	63
Ambulance Work	59
English and Germans helping one another	57
Cheerfulness and Bravery of the men who Fought	48
Dead Animals and Horses	40
Guns	38
Bombs	21
Ships	15
The Trenches	11
After the Battle	11
Aeroplanes	10
The Mines	10
The Discomforts	9
Destroyed Homes	5
The Waste	3
Prisoners	1

The horrors of war even as mildly put over in propaganda films seem clearly to stand out as the main reaction.

Two interesting figures are those for interest frequencies in Ambulance Work and in the English and Germans helping one another.

Considerable interest was also shown in the sufferings of animals, whilst "going over the top" and the firing of great guns had, naturally, a fascination.

LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 1200 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport, Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston.
Synod Hall ...	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maidenhead.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Stratford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation ...	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork.
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth.
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz	Doncaster.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.

Children & War Films—*contd.*

Question 4: *What could be done to keep War from ever happening again?*

Main Types of Answer	*Total*
League of Nations	151
Disarm	148
Friendship and Peace	83
Arbitration, Conference and Treaty	58
United World	27
Fight Aggressor	14
"Can do nothing"	10
A Plebiscite or Peace Ballot	7
World Conciliation	6
Pacifism	4
Use Religion	4
International Police Force	4
Describe War	3

These are interesting figures. This delayed Questionnaire gives an even greater reaction in favour of the League of Nations, and of Disarmament than was the case in Question 3 Paper I. This is evidence of these deeply ingrained ideas as the result of consistent teaching. But here again, ideas of World Law are almost non-existent.

Religion scores only 4 in both cases and in this paper the idea of "Can do nothing to stop war" (10) has crept in. One wonders whether the film exhibition caused discussions in the home, and in the second paper certain parental opinions are now expressed. References to the idea of a peace ballot in view of the recent National Peace Ballot were surprisingly small. Only one believed that increasing armaments would make for peace.

The general conclusion is, that in spite of much that may be feared to be war propaganda—pictures of reviews, tattoos, air displays, navy weeks, etc.—the real opinion of the young generation as to the undesirability of war is sound. The change of attitude in the teaching of History, Geography, and the emphasis laid in direct instruction on the League of Nations, etc., in the last ten to fifteen years, are clearly having effect upon young opinion.

There is far greater evidence that young minds know of, and are more ready to accept, the idea of world peace through collective action than there would have been in 1913.

An education of wider sympathies and of greater knowledge of the machinery of international government which the world, in spite of many setbacks, is laboriously building up, is clearly bearing fruit. The propaganda film—essential as it might have been in the emergency—is no longer propaganda to a new and clear-eyed generation.

These conclusions were borne out by an investigation undertaken by Mr. P. Edmonds, M.A., of the London Institute of Education, who, with control groups, tested children before and after attendance at a full military review of all modern arms of the service. Mr. Edmonds found the same vast body of opinion in the school children in favour of co-operative and sane methods of conducting world affairs. Whether these opinions would succumb to the emotional appeal of a call to arms we cannot tell, but we can safely say that no belief in aggressive and imperialistic war exists in the young people of to-day in Britain.

If the schools have built up since the war a generation favourable to world peace, then they have at least contributed in some measure to the solution of the social problems of our time.

Seven Years in the Making

The first attempt at a continuous psychological film-study of a child has been made by Fritz Putchstein in Germany. The camera was always concealed.

ON WITH LIFE! A film made by Fritz Putchstein in Germany, is the first attempt at a continuous psychological study of the same child from birth to the age of seven.

While accumulating the material for this experiment, its director has made a number of documentaries and is especially interested in the use of the film as observer and commentator on the physical and mental growth of the child.

At an exhibition of her marionettes and guinols in Berlin, Dr. Putchstein met Helene Lange, author of several books on children, who has lectured and broadcast not only in her own country but in Switzerland, on educational and psychological questions, and written articles also published in Italy. He realised at once that she was the right person to help him with the film *On With Life!* which he had already planned. Since then they have worked together on a number of productions.

The difficulties presented by the filming of very young children are many. To make matters more difficult Dr. Putchstein resolved that so far as was humanly possible the children should remain unaware of the camera. From the first the two children in his film have been accustomed to the necessary lighting and have suffered no ill effects whatsoever. The camera has always been hidden, usually behind a curtain, and a long distance lens used. This method has of course involved the wastage of a good deal of film but it has been proved well worth while by the natural results.

Continuity was also a difficulty as the attention of young children is easily diverted and they are liable to leave a game or occupation at the slightest notice.

A silent version of the film was shown in Paris at the recent Scientific Film Congress, and commentated by Helene Lange. It opens with what might be called an "imaginative prologue" with the dancing of peasants in national costume and an emphasis on the joy of living which, although it introduces some lovely photography, is rather at variance with the documentary spirit of the main theme. After a particularly beautiful shot of the mother feeding her child, the film is solely concerned with this world until we come to the "epilogue": where again the film widens its scope and lapses into the diffuse.

We follow the gradual control and strengthening of limbs, the development of sight and recognition, the sense of feeling growing with the realisation of a ball's roundness, the stage of throwing everything away, of pushing everything into one's mouth, then on from crawling to walking, and finally to the development of reasoning power in the overcoming of childish difficulties. Imaginative play in time gives way to curiosity and imitation of the grown-up world. A sense of guilt if felt at some prank and a consciousness of personal beauty and ornament is seen in the girl and soon the sexes play separately. Having forgotten the camera, we are brought back to the mechanics of the film with a nasty jar when the boy's envy of train-driver and chauffeur is illustrated by trick photography as he takes their place for a moment.

The "epilogue" of reconstructed fairy stories follows some amusing theatricals which provide an opportunity of showing the children's love of acting and display. Although much could be said for this section if it stood alone, it is not necessary to the serious purpose of the film as a whole. Throughout the film the photography is always excellent and never for a moment do the children appear to know they are being filmed. Ending on the "joy-of-a-large-family" note, the film must be taken as a document on human development, leaving aside whatever element of race or creed we may read into its interpretation.

Children's Play, a second film by Putchstein, traces the relation of traditional games to the seasons and explains their origin in the phases of growth of mind and body. Dolls, for instance, may be said to represent the imagination, while marbles call for intellect and calculation and drawing fills the need for individual creative achievement. Dr. Putchstein shows that children are much happer finding their own way and inventing means of play than when over-indulged by their parents. The importance of the dramatic play is emphasised and the film demonstrates how a group of children made their own theatre and wrote and staged their own productions.

Fritz Putchstein has caught a vitality and spontaneous humour as far removed from the studio child-film as the mechanical doll from reality, hence his films serve to sharpen our own unconscious observations and clarify a sense of logical sequence in child development.

PATRICIA HUTCHINS

Daniel Boone's covered Waggon Train sets out. (Courtesy—Radio)

Return of the Western

—With new treatment and new appeal

(Guns of the Pecos—Warner Bros.)

(Viva Villa—M.G.M.)

WITH *Texas Rangers*, *Daniel Boone*, and *The Plainsman*, Westerns again rise to a high place in movie programmes. Westerns, that is, with a difference; for though the ordinary "quickie" type retains appreciative audiences at the smaller suburban and provincial cinemas and at children's shows, they rarely appear at the larger theatres.

The continued appeal of the Western, which dates from the earliest days of cinema, is easily understood. Westerns offer complete escape from everyday life and its environment; set against natural backgrounds they help to satisfy the nostalgia of the city dweller, not many generations removed from the soil; they tell, as a rule, a straightforward story of struggle between man and man, between man and nature, between current conceptions of right and wrong; and the problems with which they deal are, as contrasted to the complexities of modern industrial life, simple ones, settled by direct action.

The decline of the Western was due to many factors. Chief among these was the sophistication of the audience; while the Western stood still, audiences became more exacting in their demands. The greatly improved technique took producers into indoor studios. Efforts to treat the Western in a historical setting, as in *Covered Waggon*, evoked little response. The coming of sound pushed Westerns still further into the background and, even if the producers had not been obsessed with the need to use the human voice all the time in every picture, the frailness of the new sound equipment made outdoor pictures seem risky.

Later efforts to bring the Western into line with modern tastes by introducing singing and dancing on musical comedy lines failed because the vital elements of the Western, movement and action, were either very much reduced or removed entirely.

A recent example of a more sophisticated, musical Western is *The Gay Desperado*. An out-of-the-ordinary story angle, some good camera work and amusing dialogue but the action is repeatedly suspended for song interludes.

The best of the new top-liner Westerns are not, as some suggest, just better photographed, more comprehensively treated versions of the old Bill Hart gun-play pictures. The ingredients of the old "wild Westerns" are there all right; the sweep of movement against vast natural backgrounds, the rapid action and the comparative simplicity of plot and characterisation.

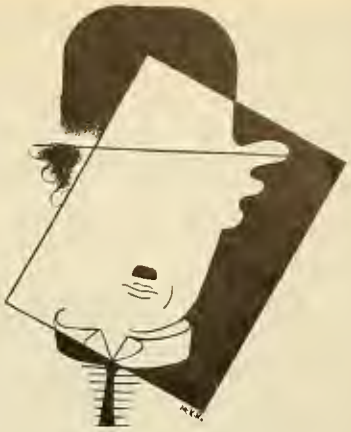
But films like *Texas Rangers*, *Daniel Boone*, and *The Plainsman*—and even some of the new "quickies"—bring historical perspective and a social consciousness to the apparently never-ending battle of law against outlaw and settler against Indian. The old Westerns made the individual a law unto himself; the new ones tend to emphasise the need to control the individual in the interests of the community. *Texas Rangers*, a magnificent picture of its kind, shows this clearly in the gradual and unconscious winning over of two outlaws to the cause of law and order and the death of the third that order may exist in the state of Texas.

True, the history leaves much to be desired, particularly in the case of the Indians who, despoiled of land and livelihood, rose against the white settlers only to be ruthlessly crushed and reduced to a demoralised remnant of a once great people. Hollywood has dared to tell something of Mexico's national struggles and wrongs at the hands of the United States, notably in *Viva Villa* and in *The Robin Hood of Eldorado*. But they show no sign of coming nearer home and presenting accurately the Indians' side to the dramatisation of the pioneering days.

The new appeal of the Western is due to a large extent to the economic circumstances of the last few years. To jaded cinema audiences, uncertain of direction and helpless individually to cope with the social forces affecting their lives, the dramatisation of the lives of men who burnt and shot their way from one side of a continent to the other, turned wastes into fertile plains, deserts into railroads and cities, and built up a nation in the process, offers welcome contrast to their own helplessness, vicarious exultation in the heroic, and escape from present-day surroundings.

RICHARD CARR

Character versus Personality



Sinclair Hill, Grosvenor's Director of Production, discusses character creation in relation to literature, the stage and the screen

That the motion picture, with its visual and aural appeal, and its tremendous advantages over the written word, has created no characters of its own comparable to the giants of literature, or even of the stage, is a charge that has been repeatedly made against the cinema.

It is pointed out that throughout the history of literature, even from the beginning of story-telling, the creation of character has been recognised as one of the highest and most important forms of the art.

One recalls, for instance, such immortals as those which strode through the pages of Dickens: Mr. Pickwick, Oliver Twist, Scrooge and all the others.

Has the screen given us a David Copperfield, or an Ivanhoe, or a Sherlock Holmes, or even a Ulysses or a Hercules?

Even children's stories have given us Cinderella, Dick Whittington and Alice (in Wonderland).

The stage has contributed the celebrated characters of Shakespeare, and in lighter sphere the Gilbert and Sullivan celebrities, and Peter Pan.

But when we try to recall any great characters which have been created by the screen (except, of course, those which have been portrayed from literature) the task is not easy.

The screen, of course, has created original characters of its own, but only very, very few. Why is this?

To obtain a really satisfactory answer it would be necessary to examine the question with far greater detail than is possible in a single article. But there are some points that are obvious.

In the first place it may be pointed out that whereas a film is only seen once by the average person, books can be reprinted again and again. Stage plays, too, may be obtained in book form, whereas the publication of film scenarios is an extremely rare practice chiefly due to the fact that scenario technique is not understood by the general public.

It may also be said that literature has the advantage of publicity during successive generations, and that the effect of this publicity is to place a character constantly before the public.

The cinema, it is true, has its own publicity department, but the difficulty here is that cinema publicity is concentrated upon the *player* rather than the *part* simply because the public is more interested in the personalities in a picture than in the characters it presents.

If William Powell or Myrna Loy are advertised in a new production the majority of filmgoers see the picture because of the enormous appeal of the personalities of Mr. Powell and Miss Loy. Were these two players set the job of playing character rôles, and were they accordingly heavily disguised to this end, their own personalities would vanish. Consequently the thousands of filmgoers who had gone to the cinema to see Mr. Powell and Miss Loy, and to see these stars only, would be disappointed. The picture might be a financial failure and the producer would suffer.

It must be remembered that the producer of a film is a business man. His job is to supply the sort of entertainment that will enable his company to pay dividends. It is up to him, therefore, to try to the best of his ability to give the public what it wants. If that public is more interested in personalities than in characters that is not the producer's fault.

It has long been a policy of the screen to present characters that have been drawn from books and plays, but here again the characters are invariably adapted or chosen to suit the personality of a certain star.

It might be argued that the writing of original stories for the screen would enable the cinema to create outstanding characters of its own. But even under these conditions most stories would still be written to fit the personality of a star.

Take the case of Greta Garbo as an illustration of my point. Miss Garbo has long been one of the biggest star attractions in the world. Did the majority of people go to see *Queen Christina* because they were interested in an historical character or because they were interested in Miss Garbo?

Do the masses go to a George Arliss film because they are attracted by the idea of seeing Cardinal Richelieu or Alexander Hamilton, or because they want to see Mr. Arliss? The answer, I think, is obvious.

But despite all this the fact remains that the screen has created one or two great characters of its own. Charlie Chaplin's little tramp, for instance, is as much a creation of the screen as say Mr. Micawber is a creation of literature.

Chaplin's tramp could not have been created with the same effect in any other medium, literary or dramatic. It is something purely visual and essentially filmic. But it is a creation not of the talkies but of the silent screen; a character created and made famous long before the advent of talkies.

It is a point of significance that whatever characters the screen has created were contributed during the period of silent films. The German, *Dr. Caligari*, made just after the war, is still remembered as an original screen creation. The comical creations of Max Linder, Larry Semon and the pre-talkie Harold Lloyd still cling to memory.

Undoubtedly, this is due to the fact that silent films were so much less dependent upon literary and stage attributes for their success.

But here I must stop and pay tribute to one person who has produced an original sound-screen character—Walt Disney.

Mickey Mouse is a real character, a creation that to my mind lives and takes his place with the best of them. Mickey is known and loved by young and old throughout the world. When he is on the screen he is very real. More important still, when he isn't amusing the eye he lives on in the imagination.

But Mickey, real and famous as he is, is merely a cartoon, a funny little animal creation with no prototype in real life.

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ROMEO AND JULIET

A Discussion between Val Gielgud and C. A. Lejeune

In the remarkable printed programme accompanying this very remarkable film, the late Mr. Thalberg is good enough to pay a tribute to Shakespeare as a poet. This was perhaps necessary, as readers of this programme are apparently supposed to be interested principally in the number of bricks employed in building 'Verona in Hollywood,' and the quantity of food consumed daily by the donkey included in the mammoth cast. They could hardly have been blamed accordingly had they wondered just who the William Shakespeare, set down as the author of this picture, really was. But there is no doubt about it. He is England's most famous poet, whose work has suffered this transformation into 'something rich and strange,' both epithets being blatantly operative. Is it very old-fashioned to wonder, after a visit to this picture, whether the time has not come to start a crusade for saving Shakespeare for his own countrymen, however much they may have neglected him in the past? Professor Reinhardt turned *A Midsummer Night's Dream* into a Hollywood nightmare, complete with a miniature Tarzan as Puck, and four charmingly up-to-date products of co-education as the lovers. Dr. Czinner made *As You Like It* as he, and possibly as Sir James Barrie, liked it, with the appropriate backgrounds of iced confectionery and a complete domestic zoo. M. Komisarjevsky, not to be outdone, produced *Antony and Cleopotra* so originally as to be literally unintelligible. Finally Mr. Thalberg—and again I call his own programme in evidence against him—proudly presents the Immortal Lovers under the caption of 'Boy Meets Girl—1436.' This is getting down to brass tacks with a vengeance.

The film, I hasten to add, is not without its points. It is very easy to follow. It is luxuriously mounted. It contains quite a large number of Shakespeare's lines. And it contains a splendid performance of 'Tybalt' by Mr. Rathbone, and a pretty good 'Capulet' by Mr. Aubrey Smith. I suggest, however, that not Capulet retainers by the score nor Montagues by the hundred; not all Mr. Messell's decorative designs; not an orchard wall hundreds of feet high, nor a banqueting hall the size apparently of Olympia; not all these beauties and more, can compensate for the fact that neither Miss Shearer nor Mr. Howard give performances even faintly recognisable as the characters which they are supposed to represent. Miss Shearer gives an inoffensive recitation of her lines, quite without passion or dramatic power. Mr. Howard looks supremely uncomfortable, is fortune's fool and defies the stars, with the same conviction and no more than that with which he more usually plays the part of inhibited and palely pathetic young heroes of conventional modern pictures. It is not enough. Mr. Barrymore and Miss Edna May Oliver, who might in the circumstances be reasonably expected to steal the honours, give performances of unedifying caricature. I remember Mr. Barrymore's 'Hamlet,' and I feel that the responsibility upon Mr. Cukor, who directed the picture, is a heavy one.

It only remains to add that the film is credibly reported to have cost £400,000, and to wonder whether all the criticism which has hailed this apotheosis of vulgarity as a masterpiece, is on the side of 'the big money' as well as the big battalions.

VAL GIELGUD

In attacking the film version of *Romeo and Juliet*, Mr. Val Gielgud falls into the usual fallacy of the amateur film critic. He assumes, and bases his arguments on the assumption, that there is a close similarity between the stage and the screen; that the film is a kind of derivative theatre, a studied aping, as it were, of a very reverend Professor by a cheeky and precocious schoolboy.

You cannot argue with anyone if that assumption is to be the basis of the argument. The stage and the screen have little in common. The one is an art. The other is largely a science. If Mr. Gielgud doesn't believe that the screen is largely a science, let him one day see what happens to a film from the moment it reaches the floor to the time it arrives at its première. What happens to it on the floor is a mere prelude to the technicalities that surround it from then on.

Let us leave the stage to look after itself. If it pleases Mr. Gielgud I am cheerfully willing to admit that the theatre may still be more successfully Shakespearean than the cinema. It ought to be. It has been practising Shakespeare for 400 years.

Romeo and Juliet as conceived by Hollywood may be "the apotheosis of vulgarity." Mr. Gielgud is entitled to his opinion. But he is not entitled to claim more than that it is his opinion. Other people have different opinions. In the absence of proof that Mr. Gielgud is an infallible arbiter of elegance, the other opinions have also a claim to be heard.

The chief merit of *Romeo and Juliet* as a film is that it has made for millions of people the world over an exciting and persuasive story of what, for the majority of those millions, has been little more than a tedious school exercise. It has made them conscious that Shakespeare was more than "England's most famous poet," a fact that was never likely to touch them very nearly. They know now that he could tell a good story in an exciting way, and that he was as well aware of the actions and reactions of men and women on one another as any modern novelist. It is a safe bet that many of those who see *Romeo and Juliet* in the cinema will go back to their forgotten volumes of Shakespeare to see if the other stories are as good as this one. Is it a crime to make people do that?

Mr. Gielgud, of course, is entirely entitled to his opinion that Mr. Howard and Miss Shearer give performances that are not "even faintly recognisable as the characters they are supposed to represent." But that is also just his opinion. My own opinion, equally valid, is that Mr. Howard's work is scholarly and Miss Shearer's moving and almost impeccable. And since Mr. Howard is plainly labelled as Romeo, and Miss Shearer is boldly announced to the world as Juliet, I am sure that not even the most nit-witted member of the audience could believe that the one was really playing Tybalt and the other Juliet's nurse.

In any case, the vast majority of film-goers will go into the cinema primarily to see Mr. Howard and Miss Shearer in anything they do, and only secondarily to see *Romeo and Juliet*. If they find themselves enjoying Shakespeare, as it were, by the way, so much the better. Mr. Gielgud, I fancy, has overlooked, in the excitement of playing paladin to Shakespeare, that fact that the chief function of any film, if it is to exist at all, is to entertain, and that the greater the number of people it entertains, the better it fulfils its function. Not even Mr. Gielgud claims that this film is not entertaining. It even, I gather, entertained him.

Finally, let us by all means start a crusade for saving Shakespeare for his own people, but let us be very clear before we start. What are we going to do with him when he is saved? If we are going to put him behind a barrage of expensive theatre seats, confine him to the limits of a West End stage, and deprive all but a few thousand middle-class people of the privilege of hearing him, we had better let Hollywood get on with the good work of providing "vulgarity" for the vulgar, and spreading his knowledge, his humour, and his humanity throughout the world.

C. A. LEJEUNE

We are glad to publish the following comments on a recent "World Film News" article, "Tradition Retards Indian Film Progress," by Winifred Holmes (September number), and the additional information about India film affairs, supplied by Ram L. Gogtay, editor of "City Lights" and the Indian Film Almanac. His survey is based on the films exhibited in Bombay from January 1st to October 15th, 1936. The pages of "World Film News" are wide open for what one feels may be a very dramatic answer from the Mohammedans. But no "butchers' knives," please!

INDIA ANSWERS BACK

By Ram Gogtay

BOMBAY, BEING THE CENTRE of film activity, in production, distribution and exhibition, it peculiarly lends itself to an authentic pulse of the trade in India.

If in 1926 there were 26 producing companies, though no more than half a dozen of them of a permanent character, in 1936 there are no more than 50. The number is not even a full hundred, let alone the "hundreds" mentioned by Mrs. Holmes, unless she has used the numerical only in a figurative sense. Of these 50, only 13 producers have their own studios, though only 3 out of these 13 can stand comparison with the well-equipped ones in the West. All the remaining 37 producing companies shoot their pictures in the two hire-out studios, one owned by a Moslem firm and the other by a Hindu firm. These were established to give production facilities to the independent producer, whose history has been so tragic that, with the exception of a few, the first picture has also been the last. Of the other 13, some are willing to hire themselves out when not occupied in production. The total number of pictures produced by these 50 companies in the current year is 73 only and this number will not exceed 91 by the end of the year 1936.

Among the Producers 45 are Hindus, only 3 are Mohammedans. The latter produced a Moslem subject each; but the Hindu producers produced 19 subjects which could have appealed to both Hindus and Mohammedans. Among the producers are included 7 concerns whose staff is cosmopolitan so that the subjects they generally produce are of common interest. Of the three Mohammedan producers, one concern is dead, the second is precariously producing another picture, while the future activities of the third are not known so far. Both are dependent on the financial returns of their first efforts, and if these are unsatisfactory they may also die down.

Moslems are incapable to-day of producing their own pictures. Here and there there may be a Mohammedan director, actor or actress, but so far only one is a partner in a concern jointly owned with a Parsi, which has regularly been producing pictures since 1926. The two mentioned in the last paragraph are not yet on a permanent footing. The cause of this is that the Mohammedans compared to the population of other communities are so illiterate that a purely Mohammedan subject would not be a paying proposition: these Mohammedans love only stunt pictures, and they are still patronising the Wild West American serials or the Indian stunt pictures produced by non-Mohammedan producers. The insignificant proportion of the cultured among the Moslems see any film they like whether Indian or foreign. Not being a cultured community, the Mohammedans are religious fanatics imbibing the doctrine of their Teacher who enforced Islam at the point of the sword, and as such a single word against their religion or their heroes is objected to. Even in a historical subject like the affection between Zebunnisa, the daughter of Aurengazeb, the Emperor of Delhi (1658 to 1707) and Shivaji, a Maratha chieftain (Hindu by religion having equal respect for Islam) when presented in a stage play was sufficient for the Mohammedans to rush with butchers' knives on the stage: the actors had to flee for their lives; pandemonium was created in the theatre; and the play had to be banned in the interests of public peace, until the rôle of Zebunnisa was transformed into that of a Rajput (Hindu) princess and the entire theme of the play altered. The film censors in the interests of public peace had to ban a couple of Moslem subjects, plunging the producers into total loss, since when the censors have insisted on examining Moslem subjects in advance of production and then too without ultimate guarantee of certificate of exhibition. No producer is, therefore, prepared to launch on a Mohammedan subject under these impossible conditions.

The Motion Picture Society of India have not been able to influence Government to reduce the duty on raw films. The influence of the Society has reacted in a negative manner by their suggestion to increase the duty on foreign exposed positives with a view to utilising the increased receipts in reducing the duty on import of raw films, so that every 8,000 feet of foreign film now pays £100 import duty instead of £65, which under the then existing drawback regulations if the film were returned to the country of origin within two years from date of import amounted actually to £8 2*s*. 6*d*. The drawback regulations have, however, been abolished altogether since January, 1936.

There is no quota system whatsoever in India, either for British or Indian films. There will be no vestige of a quota unless and until India becomes a one-language, one-caste and one-creed nation.

Dr. Madhurika (Sagar) was popular because of the star and not because of the theme, which was the most unnatural for Indian life, and took flagrant liberties with medical etiquette. *India Speaks* was never released in India, and moreover its distribution was offered to R.K.O. Radio Pictures, who refused to handle it, and not to Paramount. The Motion Picture Society had nothing to do whatever with the banning of the picture, because in the first place no distributor was prepared to distribute it in India, and secondly it was already banned by the British Government on account of the agitation against the book *Mother India* before India knew that the film had been produced. *Bengalee*, which was presented in India under the title *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, a Paramount and not an R.K.O. release, was never banned in India; on the contrary it received unqualified reception throughout. All the objections were mostly based on Mr. Subash Chandra Bose's outbursts while exiled in Europe, and were mostly from the so-called national-propagandists who had never seen the film for themselves and took Mr. Bose's word for Gospel truth. The only objectionable statement in the picture repeated more than once was that India was in the hands of a handful of British soldiers, which is a statement of fact and not open to controversy. The fact is proved by the help of soldiers needed to settle the riots happening now and again through communal disputes.

Government have passively recognised the importance of films in education, but actively they were not even conversant with the League of Nations convention on the subject until the writer apprised them of it. They have not yet officially informed the Censors that such a Convention has been ratified by India, so that the Censors have most unjustly certified educational films like those of Professor Julian Huxley's (Gaumont-British-Instructionals) as entertainment films. Neither have they formulated any special definition of their own. *The Government is most apathetic in film matters.* None of the Government Departments produce films. The Railway Board spent about £5,000 on producing travel films, but they were so worthless as to be discarded. The Red Cross have produced a film of their work and the Indian Tea Association had offered a prize for a scenario of a tea-propaganda film, but nothing further is known. Educational film production is not attempted by anybody whatsoever. Producers of features do not yet believe in them; those who believe in them have not the wherewithal to produce them; and Government are singularly silent on the subject.

"Valuable but Biased . . ."

is

WINIFRED HOLMES' Comment on Gogtay's Article

Stills from recent Indian productions.

It is most gratifying when an article arouses controversy and provokes criticism. Mr. Gogtay's information and remarks on the Indian situation with regard to films is extremely valuable as he is intimately concerned with the industry and writes direct from India. Perhaps, however, the fact that he *is* so closely connected with the making of films has its drawbacks and prevents him from being as unbiased as a mere pen-pusher would be, who collects information from every available source and sifts it to make as comprehensive a survey as possible.

One can never, on the other hand, be absolutely sure that all this information is correct, and can only apologise when a misapprehension has occurred. For instance, some of my facts concerning the activities of the Motion Picture Society of India seem to be far from correct. May I suggest that the Society answers for itself? Mr. Gogtay has little good to say of it. It should be glad to defend itself.

In company with the Editor, I too hope that a member of the Mohammedan community will reply to the allegations of illiteracy and savage fanaticism made above. To an outsider the writer's comments on the subject are more than invidious, especially in the light of the recent communal riots which are a gory recurring feature of Indian life, pointing not only at the religious zeal of the Moslems, but also at the fact that there is equal Hindu fanaticism.

It is true that Mohammedan film production is only a fraction of that of the Hindus and Parsis, but a start has been made and Mr. Gogtay himself mentions the formation of three Moslem producing companies, two of which exist to-day, whose policy is to make films for their religious compatriots. It is perfectly true therefore to state that "Moslems are now producing films especially for their own people."

Mr. Gogtay's first paragraph is also likely to rouse criticism in India. Calcutta is a big centre of film production and though it may not produce as many films as Bombay—I should like to have information about this—it has certainly been responsible for some of the best films yet made in India. One of these is *Devdas*, which my Indian friends have praised highly to me.

If Mr. Gogtay tilts at my general term "hundreds of film companies," which may, I admit freely, be somewhat of an exaggeration, I must on my part ask him politely to quote me more accurately: "In 1921 there were 21 producing companies in India." Mr. Gogtay quotes me as saying there were 26.

I was hitherto unaware that *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, which I know had a great success all over India, had ever borne the name of *Bengalee*. The film *Bengali* which I mention as having been banned is one of which Mr. Gogtay may not have heard. I again refer him to the Motion Picture Society of India.

Concerning the Government's attitude towards films, I am more than glad to hear my milder words supported by such a vigorous attack on its apathy in film matters, specially for the advance of education. My own conversations with high officials, both Indian and English, at India House and the India Office, showed me that the Government is not unaware of the cinema's possibilities and importance, but that lack of revenue is so far responsible for its tardiness in taking action. This I mentioned in my article.

Finally, with regard to my references to shorts of agricultural reform, I can only refer Mr. Gogtay to the official sources for information laid open to me at India House. I am extremely interested to hear that the Railway Department's films were too bad to use; this did not appear in the Blue Books I pored over. That films of tea-planting conditions in Assam are used to recruit labour in other parts of the country is a piece of information given me by members of the Indian Tea Association.

SIXTY MILES TO SEE A FILM

"In Australian townships the people turn out en bloc. . . more regularly than to Church"

"Many a weak Film passed muster because of the sound of the English Voice"

BY I. McAULEY

Our Australian Correspondent

FILM PRODUCTION IN AUSTRALIA has now passed its infantile and reached its juvenile stage. Quite recently there has been an outburst of productions, by several different companies, which have shown serious attempts at making films to compare in standard with those of the outside world. We still have a long way to go before we can make films as good as the best of those of England and America, but at least our more recent productions are a great deal better than the rather terrible "On-Our-Selection" type of thing that seemed to be all that we could produce at first.

Australia has the advantage of an ideal climate and the strong light and clear air that is necessary for good photography, combined with great variety and beauty of scenery; but until recently has been hampered by lack of knowledge, lack of technical skill, experience and equipment, lack of good scenario writers and good actors and actresses. All this is changing. American technicians, American actors, and American directors have been imported from Hollywood to help and teach us—and not only Americans. The recent Australian film, *Flying Doctor*, was made by National Studios in association with Gaumont-British, and was directed by Miles Mander from England, though the leading part was taken by Charles Farrell, from Hollywood.

There are, at present, over a dozen film producing companies in Australia, the chief of which are: Expeditionary Films, whose director Charles Chauvel, an Australian, has just produced *Uncivilised;* National Studios, which produced *Flying Doctor*, in association with Gaumont-British; Commonwealth Film Laboratories Ltd., which is at present working on a film called *Mystery Island*, with Lord Howe Island for background; Cinesound, which makes pictures of topical events, and Australian scenes and industries, with a commentary often by Charles Lawrence; and Fox Movitone, which does much the same kind of work.

All these companies have their headquarters in Sydney.

Another film that has recently been made in Australia is Zane Grey's *White Death*, in which the author plays the part of hero to a young Australian heroine. It is a story with the Great Barrier Reef as its setting. For the making of this film Zane Grey had his own manager and producer, and the indoor work was done at the Cinesound Studios.

During his work on this film Zane Grey said that as a background for motion pictures Australia is outstanding. "With the broad sweeping canvas of your out-back, the tropical north, and Barrier Reef islands, the pearling fleets, your gold, silver and steel, and the bustling activities of your modern cities, there is a cavalcade of romance and drama worthy of the screens of the world."

This is true, but so far our main weakness has been the quality of the stories. There has been a tendency to superimpose poor imitations of the American type of story upon an Australian background, with results that are inevitably bad. And there is another thing—Americans cannot play Australians any better than they play Englishmen.

Charles Chauvel, though not yet successful, is attempting something better. He seems the only one who treats film production in the light of an art, rather than an industry, and is trying to create something that springs essentially from the character of the country and its people. Two years ago with *Heritage*, a film that marked a big step forward in Australian production, he won first prize in the Commonwealth Competition for the best Australian produced film. In that, a review of Australia's history, taken through several generations of two families, from its first settlement by whites to the present time, he did produce something that imitated neither American nor English plays, but sincerely tried to show the Australian character in the process of formation, and an endeavour on the part of some of its modern younger generation to meet one of the problems of the moment—the problem of the land, and the pull of the pleasant city life, with all its material advantages, against the necessity for development of the out-back. In this he tried to show how much depends upon the women, how much they have to sacrifice and endure, and yet how necessary it is that they should.

Compared with world standards this film was not among the best, or the second best, nor was its acting nearly in the first class. It could have been drastically cut with advantage, but it had its good spots as well as its bad, and there were several small, but rather subtle touches that spoke, to those who know, of Australia, and no other country in the world.

Chauvel's latest film, about the Australian aboriginals, *Uncivilised*, has had the misfortune to displease the Commonwealth Film Censor, who refused to allow it to go out of the country while it contained a scene in which the heroine swims naked in a jungle pool, and another which contains the strangling of a "killer" aborigine. An application has now been made to the Films Appeal Censor for these scenes to be retained in the film which is to be released in both England and America.

In Australia nearly everyone goes to "the pictures" as they are most generally called. Quite a large section of the public goes undiscriminatingly to every change of programme at its local theatre. In any country township that boasts a picture theatre the inhabitants turn out, almost *en bloc*, more regularly to the Saturday night change of programme, than to church on the following morning.

When *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* came to a certain township in New South Wales, the people of the surrounding district drove on a winter's night, over boggy roads, thirty and sixty miles to see it, because they had heard it was "good."

Owing to the scarcity of good plays on the legitimate stage, or of almost any plays at all, the cultured and intellectual section of the public goes to the pictures in the same way that its counterpart goes to the theatre in London. So that, though amongst this mass of Australians who regularly visit the films a certain number are merely gapers, a large proportion are intelligent and critical watchers, and one hears the films criticised often with fervour and common sense, in buses and trams, in suburban homes, and in academic circles. At the moment *The Shape of Things to Come* is being discussed in almost every home. About a year ago people became hot and argumentative over the merits of Noel Coward's play *The Scoundrel*. It is interesting to note that the films that cause the most discussion are generally British.

One of the greatest advantages that British films had over American films when they first began to be shown in Australia was the sound of the English voice. Many a weak film passed muster just because of that. Added to this advantage was another. Australians, both those who have been to England, and those who have not, love to see English rural scenes upon the screen, and a view of Westminster, or Trafalgar Square, will warm their hearts with a possessive interest that a picture of the Statue of Liberty will fail to arouse. Australians on the whole feel themselves more in harmony with the British type of sentiment, humour, dialogue, and restraint of acting than with the unrestrained sentimentalism and spectacular displays of the American films.

SHOT-GUN WELCOME FOR MOVIE-MAN

Jack Glenn, a March of Time visitor from U.S.A. tells of lively experiences when filming items for M.O.T.

PERSONAL: Experiences that helped me qualify for work on *March of Time:* newspaper reporting and feature writing in Texas, New York and Paris; contact work and publicity work for Christopher Morley, Katherine Cornell and others; two years circling the world making movies—travel shorts and comedies—acting, directing, script-writing, cutting and editing; playing parts in feature movies like *Moonlight and Pretzels*, *Frankie and Johnny*, *Annapolis Farewell*; writing, directing and editing commercial and news (topical) movies in New York; two full years of stock as leading man and juvenile and also several productions. In and out of journalism in one form or another for eighteen years (since I was fourteen), working way through college at newspaper work, cartooning, biological illustration and research. It all comes in handy on *M.O.T.*, even to three years as cheer leader at my college (Rice University, Houston, Texas). The cheer leading experience is valuable in handling crowds on a large set-up—keeping them in good humour, etc. . . . This all, of course, as a sample of backgrounds of most employees of *M.O.T.* Crazy people who somehow did strange and diverse things that helped to qualify them for their present work.

ANGLES OF STORY-GETTING: The Father Divine subject brought forth lots of amusing things. Main difficulty was that Divine was GOD and must always be treated as such. Could give him no suggestion, as he condescends to suggestions from no mere man; hence suggestions as to scenes had to pass up through the angels (Faithful Mary, Heavenly Peace, Sweet Determination, Brother T.O. (Tree of Life), John Eunuch Tree, Gracious Lamb, etc.) and then these same ideas came back to the movie man as the ideas of Father Divine. Another difficulty was that once Divine got to talking and the camera was turning, no one could shut him off, as the word of God is sacred and all his words must be preserved (eight secretaries are constantly with him taking down all words that fall from the lips of God and also all words spoken to him). Naturally while God was sermonising away at four cents a foot (raw stock cost—not to mention the lab) cameramen and director were appealing to another God to have mercy on their souls. Had to make out occasionally that camera had broken down in order not to run out of film.

Had to wait for "spirit to move" Divine sometimes before he would come out after we had been waiting for him for hours. On one occasion was attacked by black, fanatical ex-killer who thought for moment that we were not under Father's blessing in getting the movies. He grabbed our eight thousand dollar camera and tried to smash it and was only prevented from doing so when we reminded him that Father was against all violence and threw the fear of God into him by looking at him unwaveringly in the eye and telling him that we would see that Father punished him properly. He broke and ran.

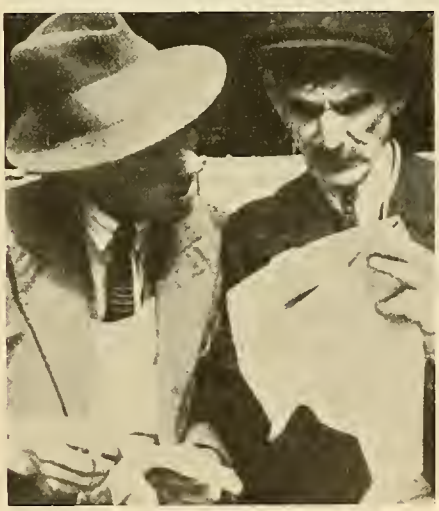
At confession meeting in Heaven Number One (113th Street, Harlem, New York) one night we succeeded in getting some marvellous scenes by reminding them that although God was four stories above in the flesh, he was very near them in spirit and that they must feel his Presence and forget about us, not look at the camera, etc. They went to it with great emotion and not a one looked at the camera. Some of the real confessions that we got on the film were so interesting (intimately so) that they couldn't be used for public exhibition.

Father Divine gave us his blessing when we went on the stormy North Atlantic to get the fish story and 11 days later we came into Boston Harbour from a very rough and dangerous trip with 187,000 pounds of cod and haddock (the ship's largest catch ever), and received the largest price the Captain had ever had. And I blush to confess that after weeks of eating and hobnobbing and all but sleeping with the Angels up in Harlem I achieved my reward—the heavenly name of Humble Hope.

FIGURE FACT: In making the Texas Centennial story we travelled six thousand miles by train and auto; and in making the Arkansas Sharecropper story we drove 5,500 miles all told.

ON-YOUR-TOES FACT: A negro woman in Oklahoma—ignorant and superstitious about cameras—sat in front of her log cabin all one day, a Winchester rifle across her knee, waiting for me to come along so that she could destroy the evil movie man who was making pictures among the sharecroppers. I took a back road and watched her awhile from behind her cabin (I had been warned by other negroes).

DITTO: Several planters in Arkansas swore to put an end to our movie making there on the sharecroppers, vowed they would "get me" and



FOOTBALL POOLS—A new M.O.T. issue

Jack Glenn, who recently visited London, directs production of "March of Time" subjects for the Company's New York office. Among his best were: "Tennessee Valley Authority," "Sharecroppers," "Texas," and "Fisheries," also the spectacular "Father Divine," which was banned in Great Britain.

set about to break up a meeting of sharecroppers we had planned at Punkin Bend (actual name). We threw them off the track by leaving a handful of sharecroppers at Punkin Bend and taking the rest (100 families gathered for two days out of the cotton fields) across the County to a schoolhouse called Antioch (also called "Flea-teaser" due to fact that fleas in the old shack were always annoying the school children) where we staged re-enactments of six sequences, including picket march, union meetings and evictions on to the road of families from their cabins.

USUAL METHOD OF WORK IN THE FIELD: Director goes ahead by train, makes contact, sizes up story, finds locations, sends back suggestions and suggested shooting script to office, gets instructions in return, sends for crew (who come by car, train or airplane, according to the time limit) and the shooting goes on. Stuff air-expressed back to office as fast as shot. New developments during course of shooting can often change whole course of the story. Editors in New York put stuff together many dozens of ways, cutting, re-cutting, burning candles at both ends, before final version. Then music and extra sound effects are scored. Then Voice of Time (Van Voorhees) and finally the "mixing." Huge orchestra using special music under direction of John Rochetti, who sometimes composes musical sequences to match the scenes. Script writers change words and ideas in script many times while editing process is going on. *M.O.T.* will send a crew anywhere to get re-enactments by figures actually involved in a story. Spare no effort to get the real people, but for personages now dead and not available on films, can call on extensive file of "doubles" where many famous personalities exist under names never heard of. Living bigwigs are now becoming more and more willing to co-operate and "doubles" for contemporaries are rarely thought of.

M.O.T. works on the assumption that Shakespeare knew his business about all the world being a stage and all the men and women players; and I've found Shakespeare's contention pretty accurate, because the best movie actors are "natural actors" and do not "project" like stage actors have been trained to do.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

EDITED BY H. E. BLYTH

Reviews of the Month

THE ROAD TO GLORY. (Howard Hawks—20th Century-Fox.)

Fredric March, Warner Baxter, Lionel Barrymore, June Lang.

By the time this appears the "rebels" may have taken Madrid or the Government may have smashed the invasion: whatever happens—we may be sure of one thing: the victorious faction will immediately begin to build its army, to store war materials, to acquire airplanes in great numbers, to prepare for the counter-revolution. The military will be lifted to a new peak of glory. A sneer against a uniform will be a capital offence. The war fever in Europe will mount another point. And what has this to do with us? We can keep in mind the reality of war, we can keep the horrors of the last war before us in book, and song, and film. There is a terrific public sentiment against any kind of war, here in America. Europe can't befuddle us again, with bunk about fighting for our honour.

The fact is that even to-day, the single universal medium capable of influencing world-mind, the film, is lost to the peacemakers. The fact is that even to-day, when the American public is receptive to the idea of peace, and may wish for peace propaganda in its films, such films cannot be made. This is because our films are not made for America, but for the world market. So far as I know, the American Government has given no hint to Hollywood as to how the militaristic theme should be treated in films. And so far as I know, the American public doesn't care which way a film points—toward peace or toward war—so long as the film is entertaining. This is the most disheartening part of the subject; the public doesn't care, because it feels no immediate danger; and therefore it is already subjecting itself to the glory poison manufactured at the express demand of foreign governments preparing their own subjects for war.

Recently there was a picture made, called *Road to Glory*. When I first saw the film I was puzzled, and in my remarks on the film* I admitted that I was puzzled because, while promoted as a film which agitated for peace by exposing the horrors of war, it nevertheless carried on all the stupid old clichés of honour and glory, and created a readiness for war sacrifice in the public mind. It made a great hero of a stupid old man who insisted on sneaking his way into the army though he was over-age, whose blunders cost the lives of several of his comrades, but who carried his old Napoleonic bugle with him throughout the battle, and who died with the bugle in his hand. The last shot was of the battered bugle, shining in the bloody mud. The old sentimental craparoo. When I saw this picture I was puzzled because it had many scenes which revealed a hatred of war; it could easily have been made as an anti-war picture; it was evident that many of the people who had worked on the story and in the action wanted to express hatred of war; and yet the character of the old man had been introduced, to sing the standard war-song.

I made some enquiries and found that my reaction to the film was correct. Many people connected with it would have liked to make an anti-war film. "And as far as the American market goes," I was told, "it wouldn't have mattered. But you can't risk an anti-war film in Europe. And there's forty per cent of your gross." And there, very simply, is the story. Americans, paying the heavy share of the movie-maker's income, would accept anti-war films. Foreign countries, paying the lighter share, dictate the policy.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

**Vide "World Film News" for October, page 25.*

POPPY. (A. E. Sutherland—Paramount.)

W. C. Fields, Rochelle Hudson, Richard Cromwell.

He wanders through small shops and circuses, public bars, children, sideshows, straw hats and nagging women with a bemused aloofness that makes him in this life but not of it. He's Bacchus dropped from the clouds and made to work in the corner grocer's. He has every decent human motive and would almost choose to act out an honest life, but around him he sees small-timers cheating each other all the way. That wouldn't distress him either if there was any style to their tricks. But people are so mean and clumsy he feels obliged to give them a lesson or two, an accomplished robbery here, a short bargain there, done with enough flourish to give the human game some dignity. He'll try any roguery once, just to feel the thrill of the gestures, just to feel superior to the morons who suspect him. But he never hopes to win anything. Except at the end of the film. It has been Fields' great and individual improvement on the Chaplin pathetic ne'er-do-well that instead of fading away up a lonely road poor but blithe, he ends by winning decisively for the first time in his life.

In *It's a Gift* he goes through endless squabbling failures to get across the continent and claim an orange grove that turns out to be a shambles. But a man comes along and offers him a fortune for the land as a building site. And the last shot was Fields leaning back, in seersucker and a neatly pinned tie, fanning himself in the sun and downing a highball. In *Poppy*, he begins promisingly by selling his talking dog and not unnaturally taking the voice away with him, but then after much intermediate wrangling with poor fools ("Who will be the next to outwit me? This is a game of chance") he ends by going off with the Mayor's hat, rather silkier than his own, and a fistful of the Mayor's cigars.

It was cruel that Mr. Bernard Shaw should be asking for "better voices" and good diction on the screen the week that Fields came along. For he stands as a convenient symbol of the war between stage and screen, between "fine speaking" and ordinary day-to-day thinking aloud. He plays with two voices,—a smooth, pompous trained voice, and a mumbling bemused one. And, not to take sides too openly, I should say he uses the first, the overripe voice, for all his artifice, all the public occasions when he's trying to swindle somebody or claim a family tree. But he's always caught out by the second voice, by his muttered suspicion that this sort of thing has happened before in the world's history. He may with a fine flourish of hand and elbow say, "I have here, gentlemen, a very fine timepiece that cost five hundred dollars, yes, sir, five hundred dollars," and you can hear him saying under his breath, "you'll never get away with it."

Every time he tries to be an actor, horse sense whispers in his ear. Every time his first voice tries to deceive other people, his second is telling him out of the corner of his mouth that he's kidding nobody but himself. It doesn't matter much if you don't even catch what the second voice is saying. It's simply nervous speech with, I'm afraid Mr. Shaw, definitely bad diction,—it's Everyman's misgivings, second thoughts, delayed humility. In *Poppy*, it happens to be the language of W. C. Fields, an American juggler. Ideally, it's the common language of all Cockneys, and French taxi-drivers, and Texas cattlemen, and all simple men permanently impressed by the irony of human dignity. It's a precious language that belongs more to the movies than to any other form of deception. For it's the phonetic equivalent of a sense of fact. And when the screen takes Mr. Shaw's advice and doctors its voice, it can say goodbye to most of the virtues the screen can still claim over a theatre resonant with a clatter of consonants and coy scruples. I'll sit through the movies just as long as the natural voice is accepted as the standard. The day Gary Cooper gets busy with his diction, I shall take to a tricycle.

—Alistair Cooke,
The Listener

"You'll never get away with it" (Poppy)

W.F.N. SELECTION

Rembrandt	* * *
Injustice	* *
Dodsworth	* *
The Gay Desperado	* *

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

The Road to Glory

Poppy

Injustice

Rembrandt

The Gorgeous Hussy

Dodsworth

The Three Maxims

Fox Hunt

The Gay Desperado

China Clipper

The Devil Takes the Count

INJUSTICE. (Louis King—First National.) Donald Woods, Kay Linaker.

So far as I can learn, this has not been reviewed by any of the London papers. It comes with no general acclaim. It contains no star names. Its only recommendation to the British public that I can trace came over the radio from New York, when Alistair Cooke, discussing the "Films of the Year," put it, with *Mr. Deeds*, at the head of a list that included *Pasteur* and *Modern Times*. It is a film in the direct tradition of *I am a Fugitive*, a "vivid piece of social protest against a political machine in the Middle West which runs the prisons of one of the Southern States with incredible brutality at a profit." It is not pretty to watch; it comes with no glamour of fine camera work or lavish production; but it is compelling, gathering force with every foot, as real as it is raw. I must quote Alistair Cooke's words over the radio. "This film," he said, "has no sort of dignity, because in spite of the literary myth, neither has suffering. It just goes along ripping away the cultivated front from every man who wears a pearl in his tie. It takes you horribly into the prison, and makes you wince as you should if this kind of film has any meaning. It is brilliantly acted by a practically anonymous cast." Jeering at Hollywood for its lack of social responsibility has become, as we all know, one of our leading national sports, but where is the British film company that would have the faith or the courage to make a document like this exposing any of our own social sores?

—Frank Evans,
The Newcastle Evening Chronicle

REMBRANDT. (Alexander Korda—London Films.)
Charles Laughton, Gertrude Lawrence, Elsa Lanchester.

This is probably the most technically perfect and beautifully produced film you will yet have seen. My memory is one of clear-cut brilliance, white lights and deep shadows, shining floors and an all-pervading cleanliness and elegance. To paint a portrait of the master of portrait painters is as difficult a task as any screen actor has been set. Laughton triumphs. We find him with fire in his eyes in lusty youth, painting beggars as biblical kings and scorning the smooth trivialities of popular art. We leave him old and grey, a trifle bloated, with rag-bound feet, accepting charity and spending it on paints, bright-eyed, serene, and without bitterness. He started as Laughton, but by the end of the film he has grown into a Rembrandt portrait. There are lyrical passages in the dialogue of a beauty seldom found in films, but no less impressive for their unexpectedness. Perhaps this film lacks suspense and the detached presentation of events which the cinemagoer is accustomed to accept as drama, but whatever the box-office verdict, it is a thing of very great beauty.

—Guy Morgan, *The Daily Express*

No film could hope to equal the life in Rembrandt's own paintings—the self-portraits alone defy such attempts—and those concerned in this film have wisely refrained from trying to represent Rembrandt as himself. Instead, they have concentrated on something in him, and built up a picture of a man always a little detached from the world around him, but always sure of his own world within him. Through the events we have watched we later realise the growing of a man's mind, and thus have been persuaded to believe that this man (with Charles Laughton's voice and, despite brilliant make-up, Charles Laughton's appearance) could be, and seems, a great artist. It is for this reason that Charles Laughton has never given a more sincere characterisation, nor Mr. Korda made a better film.

—R. H., *The Manchester Guardian*

Rembrandt strikes a new note in screen biography. It is a note struck by the biographer and not by the material. *Rembrandt* is an illustration to a thesis. The thesis is the biographer's. The actors, the story, the photography are his instruments. Korda preaches, Ecclesiastes is his text, Laughton is his bookboard.

For once the overacting of Laughton is disciplined in a thought pattern which is greater than his portrayal of the downfall of a painter.

The film has been thought uncinematic because it does not bang at every cut and jerk with the backfire of the gangster's chariot. Without gunfire or hellfire it presents truth in a frame which has all the peace, the sincerity, the simplicity, the stillness of great truth. Here is the communion of minds. The biographer and his audience contact on the plane of the verities. We are here beyond the stimulation of emotions which is accepted as the cinema's normal material.

Here is no historical pageant, no *Henry VIII* story of a period, no *Jane Grey* romance of personal intrigue, no *Mary of Scotland* setting for the old old story but the triumph of a great and noble spirit which is the victory of all spirit over the world, the flesh and the devil.

Like *The Story of Louis Pasteur* one man carries the story of all his kind. *Pasteur* was the victory of science told objectively in the life of one man. In *Pasteur* the truths were facts; in *Rembrandt* the truths are values. For a new element enters. It is the biographer's consciousness of his own art. In his evaluation of Rembrandt's life he evaluates all life. It is welcome because it restates values which are too often lost.

—Baird, *W.F.N.*

"Rembrandt" (London Films)

"The Gay Desperado" (Pickford-Lasky)

THE GORGEOUS HUSSY. (Clarence Brown—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Joan Crawford, Robert Taylor, Lionel Barrymore, Franchot Tone.

The title of this film gives no suggestion of the story, which is a heavy tragedy with many deaths, overpowering self-sacrifice, and a strong political flavour. The heroine, so unfortunately described in the title, was the niece of President Andrew Jackson, and many of her troubles came because she shared his opinion that the United States should be united, an opinion which he expresses at great length at frequent intervals in the film. But the film is not all political speeches, for the heroine's love affairs are remarkably complicated. Miss Joan Crawford acts the part with real accomplishment, and she often manages to give life to separate episodes, though no actor or actress could be expected to pull together the unwieldy structure of the whole film.

—*The Times*

I found myself admiring this new Joan Crawford, less extravagant of make-up and gesture, more reposed, more sympathetic. Here, in crinolines and the polite backchat of nineteenth-century Washington, torn occasionally by a ruthless election and by social bickering, she plays the part of an innkeeper's daughter whose sailor husband is killed, and who then becomes the friend and confidante of President Jackson. The film has a pleasant leisure in its development, some pointed humours of the placid, penetrating variety, an occasionally touch of quite genuine feeling, and spends a tranquil hour and a half in pleasant company.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

DODSWORTH. (William Wyler—United Artists.)

Walter Huston, Ruth Chatterton, Mary Astor.

If you have hands to clap prepare to clap them now. Here, at last, is a film worthy of one's entire stock of superlatives. Here is a film which is so much better than every film made since the introduction of sound that I feel ashamed at wasting my enthusiasm on the others. This history of the "Zenith" motor-manufacturer and the selfish, brainless, good-looking wife whom he adores is a masterly portrayal of ordinary life. He sells his factory. She seizes the chance to travel. She wants Paris, and London, and Rome; anything but to grow old in Zenith. So they start, any two American tourists. She begins to despise Sam Dodsworth, because he wears the wrong clothes and says the wrong things, because, as he expresses it with humorous understanding: "These people know us diabolically for the couple of hicks we are." The acting of Walter Huston as Dodsworth, of Ruth Chatterton as the wife, is photographic. Every part, however small, is played with the same absolute perfection of detail. Congratulations to the entire film industry of the world on having at last produced a good film.

—Anthony Gibbs, *The Sunday Chronicle*

Dodsworth is a very well-made and well-acted film, with an essentially trivial subject. Dodsworth, a retired American magnate, urged by his wife, takes his first trip to Europe in the *Queen Mary* (the film has a breathless topicality about its inessentials). Mrs. Dodsworth is a priggish, conceited woman, her thin mundane shell is stretched above a deep abyss of unsophistication. She feels the approach of old age and grandmaternity, and is determined to get in her fling irrespective of her husband's feelings. She begins in the ship disastrously and ignominiously, but she graduates slowly at the various European capitals towards a degree in well-mannered adultery. No one, I think, will fail to enjoy *Dodsworth*, in spite of its too limited and personal plot, the sense it leaves behind of a very expensive, very contemporary Bond Street vacuum flask. Naturalness is so rare on the screen that it is difficult not to over-praise any pictures which possess it, but more than naturalness is needed for deep enjoyment.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

THE THREE MAXIMS. (Herbert Wilcox—Herbert Wilcox Productions.)

Anna Neagle, Tullio Carminati, Leslie Banks.

Unfortunately the preparations are so good that they prepare one for a much better story than this account of two acrobats competing for the hand of their partner, and of one preparing to murder the other and then relenting. It is only at the very end that one realises with acute disappointment that this is all, so cunningly has the director suggested coming mysteries and surprises. As so often, really good material and great technical accomplishment are wasted on the simplest and most stereotyped theme.

—*The Times*

My dear Anna,

You richly deserve your place among the three most popular actresses in British films. None has worked with more intense application to the business of becoming a really worth-while star. I criticise only because I have so much admiration for you. Frankly, *The Three Maxims* is not worthy of Anna Neagle. It is the film that lets you down. As a plain tale simply told it serves its purpose . . . but is it good enough for such talented people as yourself, Tullio Carminati and Leslie Banks? I know that this picture was made for "popular" consumption. Your director, Herbert Wilcox, makes no bones about the fact that he did not produce it for sophisticated audiences. What worries me is the slack way in which this slender story is filled out, or not filled out. None of you has very good dialogue, and some of it is bad. The characterisation is superficial, and the production lacks the necessary incident to make the figures more than puppets. I hope you will see this letter so that we can talk it over.

—Yours, A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

FOX HUNT. (Hector Hoppin and Antony Gross.)

Undoubtedly the best film of many weeks is the coloured cartoon, *Fox Hunt*. The artists, Mr. Hector Hoppin and Mr. Antony Gross, use Technicolour with a freedom and beauty quite outside Mr. Disney's picture-book range. A hunt which turns into a mechanised chase, a motorbus playing an agile part; swollen, narcissine, decadent horses preening before gilt mirrors: both theme and drawings have unusual wit, but what remains in the memory is the lyrical use of colour: the white ringletted horse ballooning over the dark box hedges of the little enclosed garden with its classical statue, the rich autumn ruin under hoof, the bypass road lined with gay sublimated posters.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

THE GAY DESPERADO. (Rouben Mamoulian—Pickford-Lasky.)

Nino Martini, Ida Lupino, Leo Carillo.

Gay is the word for this witty, musical rag which "guys" Mexican bandits *and* the American kind. Leo Carillo is a delightful bandit of the plains, with a soul for music and a mistaken idea that his men should copy the gangsters they see at the local movies. He kidnaps a tenor (Nino Martini) and holds up a radio station so that Nino may broadcast "by the courtesy of Braganza, the bandit." Oh, there is a lot more fun on those lines, done with a rare sense of satire and offering Nino many opportunities to sing magnificently. For sheer good fun and good singing I cannot recommend *The Gay Desperado* too highly.

—A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

Without Mr. Mamoulian's direction, the film might either have been sunk in the oceanic depth of musical comedy or have foundered on the familiar rocks of obvious satire; as it is, the film plays about the ocean, skirts the rocks, commits itself to neither, and remains its own exuberant, unexpected self. In Mr. Nino Martini the director has found a singer formally to sing, and, with the same gusto, informally to throw frying-pans at Miss Lupino's head.

—*The Times*

CHINA CLIPPER. (Raymond Enright—First National.)

Pat O'Brien, Humphrey Bogart, Ross Alexander.

The cry of a script-writer to his Muse is no longer "Every man for himself!" but "Every man for his Cause!" The Cause has, by now, established itself in all films of major importance. Witness the unemployed farmers of Capra's masterpiece; the dump-inhabiting down-and-outs of *My Man Godfrey*. Here, for the first time, it makes its debut in a smaller picture—and on a larger scale!

The moral of *China Clipper* would appear to be that, so long as the Cause is fundamentally good, one may fight for its attainment by the foulest possible means. Pat O'Brien, for the further advancement of civil aviation in America, built a mammoth air-line with the intention of establishing regular flights across the Pacific Ocean. In the pursuit of this end, he alienated his wife's affection, treated her plea for renewed friendship with abominable cruelty, killed a kindly old aeroplane designer through overwork, and drove his exhausted subordinates relentlessly to the point of mutiny. The trans-Pacific flight was a

success. Whereat Mr. O'Brien became the hero of the hour, was slapped on the back by an admiring nation, forgiven by his wife, and faded out (by a discreet director) trailing clouds of glory. Let it be. Philosophy or no philosophy, this is a thundering good picture, thronged with every sort of thrill imaginable at high altitudes and a great deal of determined drama at ground level. The film has but one real fault—and that a minor one. It is the Cause, my soul, it is the Cause.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

The film, I am afraid, is neither as fine nor as exciting as its subject, thanks to a certain stolidity of acting and sentimentality of writing. I am sorry, but Pat O'Brien's playing still seems to me to have just about the subtlety of a trombone, and I have never been able to shout, with the enthusiasm of a Hepburn in *Alice Adams*, "Hurrah, Hurrah for Ross Alexander!" The struggle, however, for wings over the Pacific is still one of the more valid of the season's dramatic subjects. If our own film industry were half as quick in the perception of drama, I should be—quite possible—content.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

THE DEVIL TAKES THE COUNT. (W. S. Van Dyke—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Freddie Bartholomew, Jackie Cooper, Mickey Rooney.

There were some likeable moments in the Bowery back streets as the three musketeers of the gutter fought and played. But I am unconvinced that Freddie Bartholomew could never live in the Bowery and stay alive, while Cooper's pouting lower lip has become rather too obvious a passion to hold much interest. The film descends to some unfortunate bathos in its conclusion, but Rooney makes it all worth while.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

"Injustice" (First National)

The Devil is a Sissy, a picture of crime and environment walking hand-in-hand down the streets of the lower East Side, having a soft-hearted plot at its core, is not as ruthless as the Kingsley play, "Dead End," in its examination of gangster-breeding, but within its optimistic limits the film contains a shrewd understanding and vivid portrait of the little men of Mulberry Street. Although the film slips off into familiar and lachrymal grooves toward its conclusion, it is fresh and crisp and natural most of the way, and it has been served extraordinarily well by its cast. But it is Mickey Rooney who penetrates beyond the script and emerges as a living study of Gig, the son of a murderer. His is, without question, one of the finest performances of the year.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Continental Films

HORTOBAGY (Hungary—Höllering.)

The director of *Hortobagy* (*Hungarian Plains*) is an Austrian, Georg Höllering. He lived among the horse breeders of Hungary for two years, and his film was acted by these peasants who have a thousand-year-old tradition, but are now coming into contact with industrial development. Höllering considers that his film is a bridge between two epochs. The struggle between the old and the new is his main theme.

He has chosen as his central characters six peasants of different generations. There is the old peasant woman, who, at the end of her life goes to the man she has loved after fifty years: there is the middle-aged horse breeder and his small son who, the father assumes, will naturally follow him as head of the farm. The son, who has acquired a bicycle and has a friend working on the new oil derrick, has set his heart on becoming a mechanic. After a conflict with his father, the boy runs away and becomes a worker, and even after an accident on the derrick will not relent.

These people and their struggles are brought together on the day of the local fair when the stallions are put to stud. The horses are not incidental; they are as important as the people, for, as in *Earth*, where life and death is as natural as the falling of the apples, so in *Hortobagy* the loves and sorrows of the peasants are as simple and inarticulate as those of the mares and stallions. What is so true in this film is that the characters of the people retain an unbroken tradition through every change in outward circumstance. The love for the old way of life does not cease with the commencement of the new. Thus, though the boy is in revolt against his father's ways, his grief is as great as his father's when his horse is killed; and he watches with the same pride and excitement as his father when a mare is foaling. Incidentally, this sequence of the foaling is one of the most impressive and beautiful things that has ever found its way on to the screen.

Hortobagy takes its place beside the great films. It will be shown by the Film Society during December: unfortunately if it is publicly shown in this country, it will probably be mutilated in the name of purity.

M. S.

FREDLOS (OUTCAST)

Fredlos, the new picture at the Academy, is the first film to be made by Finland. Not only does it introduce a new and sincere director, George Schneevoigt, but also a potential 'star,' the Lapp girl, Gull-maj Norin, who has a Hepburn quality. Schneevoigt's direction (he is also part scenarist) is simple and straight forward, he attempts no unusual experiments: his chief defect is a tendency to allow some of his episodes to be unnecessarily long. As Finland has no studio, the interior work was done in Copenhagen; but the greater part of the picture consists of beautiful exterior scenes, shot in Finland. This film is not a documentary although it shows a certain amount of traditional ceremonial, and such typically northern occupations as reindeer farming. The story centres around the life of a well-to-do farmer and his family who come into

"Hortobagy"

conflict with a tyrannical Russian governor (excellently played by the Swedish actor, John Ekmann). The events take place towards the end of the last century.

The struggles and misfortunes of the Murtaja family symbolise the oppression of Finland under the Tzars. The father is exiled to Siberia for being in possession of arms; the mother is forced to go to the poorhouse when her son, Juhani, rescues his Lapp wife, Aino, from the governor's greedy clutches and then condemns them both to be outcasts. In spite of a certain amount of national propaganda towards the end—Juhani rouses the villagers to overthrow the governor—the story is a personal drama which can be appreciated by any audience who enjoy unusual films. The English titling is excellent.

M. Seton

MAYERLING. (Anato Litvak—French.)

Charles Boyer, Danielle Darrieux.

Much has been written, and more has been whispered, about that fateful night in the lonely hunting lodge where the Archduke Rudolph of Austria and Baroness Marie Vetsera met their death. The truth about Mayerling has taken various forms, yet mystery and Mayerling remain inseparable. Whether the new French picture presents the true solution in the death-pact of the tragic lovers is of little consequence. For the strength and interest of the drama lies in the gradual growth of the bonds between the unhappy Hapsburg Prince and the little Baroness, their separation by the Emperor, and their last reunion. A dark and gripping picture, in which the director is immensely helped by the veracity of the acting. Every character has significance, but the action is naturally dominated by Charles Boyer, whose study of Rudolph's varying moods is brilliant, and by Danielle Darrieux, whose lovely Marie is a grave and tender child earnestly offering the solace of her love.

—Michael Orme, *The Sketch*

CONTINENTAL NEWS

Marcel Carné : French writers and exhibitors protest : Finland's secret police and cultural cinema : New Dutch and French Films

(From W.F.N.'s Continental Correspondents)

A new name in French film production is Marcel Carné, for some time assistant to Jacques Feyder. Carné has learned much from Feyder, but he brings to his work a new and convincing style. He makes full use of changing tempo to outline the relationships between persons. His use of silent technique provides a background and a commentary on the dialogue. Though the story of his film *Jenny* (a sort of "Mrs. Warren's Profession") is trivial, it is the treatment that matters. The characterisation is good: Françoise Rosay is splendid as the faded woman clinging to her gigolo lover, whilst Albert Préjean, after many ordinary performances reveals again something of the qualities he showed in the days when he starred for René Clair.

* * *

Sascha Guitry, author, director and actor, set out to produce a film in the manner in which autobiography is written, with the chief character recounting the events and commenting upon them. The idea contained possibilities and the result might have been a new style of sound technique. But, instead, *Roman d'un Tricheur* is little more than a silent film with the monotonous accompaniment of Guitry's voice—Guitry playing the chief character. He speaks for all the characters, including the women, as their lips move.

* * *

A journey to the Congo gave Marc Allegret, nephew of André Gide, material for a documentary on negroes. This was followed by an open-air film of youth, *Lac aux Dames* and, striking contrast in its commerciality, *L'Hotel de Libre Echange*. It would seem, from one of his newest pictures, *Sous les Yeux d'Occident*, that Allegret is versatile, for this picture shows very able direction. It is strange that, in comedies such as *Aventure à Paris*, these qualities find no expression whatever.

* * *

French film writers are organised in L'Association des Auteurs de films. At its last general meeting this body protested against the method adopted by certain producers in securing film versions of well-known works. The producers, it appears, ask a writer to adapt a certain work for the screen: after reading the scenario they then approach several other authors on the same lines and often the final scenario contains ideas taken from all the different versions. L'Association urges its members to secure protective conditions before adapting works for the screen so that all those engaged in the writing get paid for it.

* * *

French exhibitors are also protesting—against the installation of film apparatus in municipal theatres. Film apparatus has already been installed in the Théatre de la Gaité and the Théatre Sarah Bernhardt and exhibitors fear that these theatres are going to compete with the Paris cinemas. The authorities have replied to this protest by assuring exhibitors that the apparatus is intended, in the first place, for certain effects in theatrical productions and, apart from this, the only other use to which it will be put is for matinées for school children at which will be shown educational films.

* * *

Finland's cinéastes are laughing over the antics of the secret police. So little work have they to do, that to justify their existence they drew up a document categorically charging every cultural society in the country with being inspired from Moscow. "To work for peace and freedom is to work for revolution," the police say. As prominent government conservatives are on many of these societies' committees, the resulting scandal has led to a wide demand that the secret police be cleansed.

Alvar Aalto and other leading artist and film technicians, members of "Projectio," Helsingfors' chief film society, were suspected by the police. Reason: film club showed a Russian experimental short, at a private show to members.

* * *

Max Ophüls, the Dutch director, is under contract to a Hollywood company to make *Liebelei*. The first version of this film was directed by Ophüls in Germany several years ago.

Ophüls has made an artistic success of his new picture *Comedy for Gold*. The story is about Brant, a bank messenger, who loses an enormous sum of money, is accused of stealing, is acquitted for lack of evidence but loses his job. Just as he has turned on the gas and intends to make an end of it, a financial company of dubious reputation invites him to become a member of their board of directors, as they believe he is still in possession of the lost money. Brant agrees but only later discovers that he is supposed to back his position with the money. Eventually he does find the money but takes it to his rightful owners. There are further complications, for the insurance company have already made good the loss. Brant is arrested and this time goes to jail for a year or two. But of course there is a happy ending.

The social contrasts in the picture are cleverly shown, the sound accompaniment giving strong emphasis to the depths of despair into which the bank messenger is thrown. When he first loses his job a barrel organ is playing a triumphant old song about Holland being mistress of the seas.

Comedy for Gold is not a typical Dutch picture. It has international appeal and might have been made in Hollywood or England—at extra cost. It might have been made in the *Mr. Deeds* manner and been a better commercial proposition. But Ophüls has taken the subject and its social implications seriously and made a picture which provokes thought. His use of sound and visual symbols show imaginative direction.

* * *

The different branches of the French Film Industry are attempting to combine against the possibility of State-compelled and controlled union. A "Conféderation Générale du Cinema" has been formed in which the existing, and previously independent, organisations of producers, distributors, manufacturers and exhibitors are combining.

The federation does not represent the entire industry since the older "Federation des Chambres Syndicales" is not included. This body stands for more vigorous protection for French film production and more severe measures against foreign films. The American distributors who left the older organisation some years ago in protest against its proposals concerning foreign films are organised in the new federation, and this fact alone makes agreement between the two bodies extremely unlikely.

* * *

Cartoon and puppet films are to-day playing a surprisingly small part in the German cinema programme. Apart from being used for advertisements they scarcely exist. Tobis is the only company that considers that the cartoon film can be an end in itself. Therefore, in the near future they will produce a series of films.

One can see a few attempts at "trick" film at the beginning of the performance in any German cinema. But these films are elementary attempts. They are clearly made in a hurry and very much to order. Those in colour which use realistic looking puppets of the ventriloquist's doll type are in Gasparcolour, and they usually advertise collars. Others in black and white are using realistically drawn figures of people against quite unimaginative backgrounds; and the people usually end in going to a restaurant where they have a highly coloured meal. (Only the dishes are in colour.) The most promising pictures are those advertising the Agfa films. They are a combination of natural "shots" of people going off on holidays with amusingly drawn figures of Agfa films with comic heads and spidery legs.

Vigo's "L'Atalante"

VIGO COMPLETED this film just before his death. It is sufficient evidence that had he lived he would probably have been the finest European director since cinema began.

The film tells a simple story about a young girl who marries a barge owner and gets a little tired of the narrow life she has to lead on the canals. The barge comes to Paris and she is seduced by the glamour of the city and runs away, but in the end comes back to her husband.

The treatment, however, is unique, in that for the first time the fantastic and realistic elements of life have been intermingled in sound and picture, so that every member of the audience can feel, as they themselves feel all through their existence, the simultaneous reactions of the internal and external life of the characters. Although it is obvious that Vigo was groping towards a satisfactory form for his ideas without complete success (there are many times when the film appears a little disjointed), yet, in general, the film has an assurance of purpose which can only come from someone with deep understanding of humanity.

Certain sequences in the film have been described as surrealistic, but this is probably an inaccurate way of describing Vigo's fantasy, for never, at any moment, does the film cease to be personally real. The scenes between the young wife and the old barge-hand, in his fantastically decorated cabin; the scenes of her husband's wanderings and indecisions after she had left him; and the truly remarkable opening sequence of the film, are probably the finest things which cinema has yet given us.

C. M.

COMPLAINTS of B.B.C. SPEAKERS

J. B. PRIESTLEY ON THE TALKS DEPT. (FROM THE *STAR* OCT. 23rd.)

A RECENT CORRESPONDENCE I have had throws a clear light on the B.B.C. Some time this autumn or winter I have to open the new civic theatre in Bradford.

I received a letter from the Northern Regional Studio, asking me if I would broadcast a talk on Repertory Theatres, or something of that kind, while I was up North. I said I would.

I was then informed that a copy of my talk must be in the hands of the B.B.C. at least a fortnight before the date of broadcasting, and that I must go to the studio to rehearse. "Otherwise," I was told, "the project must be abandoned."

"The project," I replied at once, "is abandoned." In other words, I was not prepared to accept these arbitrary conditions. To begin with, I cannot see why I should send them a copy of my talk a fortnight in advance of giving it.

I have broadcast in America, over the "national hook-up," on more important and controversial topics than Repertory Theatres, and not been required to give them a sight of my manuscript until a day or two beforehand.

I shall not forget in a hurry that famous night in Portland Place, when I was due to talk to all Britain and America, and the B.B.C. mislaid all copies of my script, and would not let me improvise anything, and so kept the whole Anglo-Saxon wireless world silent for fifteen minutes.

Then again, when my time is limited, during a brief visit to another part of the country, why should I be compelled to rehearse my talk?

It is not as if I were a novice. And editors do not ask me to call at the office and do a trial article. Chairmen of public meetings or dinners do not ask me to appear before them and give a sample of my oratory.

If the B.B.C. lavished money and flattering attention on its lecturers, I could understand this hoity-toity attitude. It could afford to be peremptory. But the only people it is prepared to be lavish with are comic singers and American film stars.

Any successful writer who broadcasts here is compensated so poorly for his time and trouble that he is doing somebody a favour by broadcasting at all. Please notice how many successful writers figure in the B.B.C. programmes. Now you know why there are so few.

COMMENTS

MR. H. G. WELLS

I have the closest sympathy with J. B. Priestley's indignation. I have always resented the attempts of the B.B.C. officials, mostly quite obscure people, to censor the talk of their betters. Personally I think it highly improbable that I shall talk on the radio again—unless conditions alter very considerably.

PROFESSOR JULIAN HUXLEY

In general I agree with Mr. Priestley. It is clear that the script must be in the hands of the B.B.C. authorities beforehand, but there seems no reason why such a length of time should be prescribed, and in the case of people who have broadcast before I cannot understand the need for a rehearsal.

MR. G. D. H. COLE

I entirely agree with Mr. Priestley's attitude. The requirement that B.B.C. speakers should submit scripts in advance—and sometimes rehearse into the bargain even when they are not novices—is absurd, especially in view of the B.B.C.'s very low rates of pay. I can see no reason whatsoever why, save in very exceptional circumstances, any advance production of scripts should be required. Incidentally, I find that having to read from a script puts me off and destroys the spontaneity of what I have to say.

COLONEL MOORE-BRABAZON, M.P.

On the whole I think that the rule that the B.B.C. want to know what is going to be said on their system is a sound one, as somebody might very easily take advantage of their position and a great deal of harm might be done.

On the other hand there are certain people who could be trusted, and I should have thought that the difficulty could be overcome by breaking the rule occasionally—which I know is actually done sometimes.

Priestley is obviously someone who could be given free speech.

PROFESSOR HAROLD J. LASKI

I could contribute nothing of any value beyond what Mr. Priestley has said.

Last month the B.B.C. revived that classic feature-programme "The March of the '45."

George Audit writes :—

It still stands up magnificently. There is action all the time, and the scene of the Pretenders entering Edinburgh remains about the best thing in radio yet.

Bridson knows how to make coming events cast their shadows before. While the council of war is arguing whether or not to march on Carlisle the drums are already sounding the advance before the decision has been made.

When the Pretenders come to Manchester you hear a group of city merchants discussing prospects. Weighing up the relative merits of Stuart and Hanover as investment propositions, they plump for Hanover and close their gates against the Bonnie Prince. A north country business man was heard to remark that this scene might have been a Manchester directors' meeting discussing Government policy to-day.

B.B.C. Events

Wednesday, Dec. 2nd, 3.15 p.m.: England *v.* Hungary (Soccer). Commentary. REGIONAL.

Thursday, Dec. 3rd, 6.20 p.m.: Talk. *This Way Out.* John Hilton. NATIONAL. 7.15 p.m.: *Away to the Hills.* Operetta by C. Denis Freeman. Music: Mark Lubbock. NATIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: Hallé Concert, from Manchester. Elgar, Brahms. Conductor: Beecham. REGIONAL.

Friday, Dec. 4th, 8.30 a.m.: First Test Match. Commentary by Alan Kippax, from Brisbane. NATIONAL. 2.30 p.m.: Feature Programme. *The Centenary of McAdam.* NATIONAL.

★Monday, Dec. 7th, 8.15 p.m.: *Julia I*, from Covent Garden. British Movie Drama Opera Company. REGIONAL. 9.35 p.m.: *Mr. Faithful*, by Lord Dunsany. Production: Sievking. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Dec. 8th, 2.5 p.m.: Varsity Rugger Match, Twickenham. Commentary: Capt. H. B. T. Wakelam. REGIONAL.

Thursday, Dec. 10th, 8.0 p.m.: Feature Programme. *For All Ills.* Production: Cheatle. REGIONAL. 9.40 p.m.: *Facets of Syncopation.* The Middle Ages of dance music. NATIONAL.

Friday, Dec. 11th, 3.35 p.m.: Talk for Sixth Forms. J. B. S. Haldane. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Dec. 12th, 9.0 p.m.: Bristol Colston Hall Opening. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductor: Beecham. Dennis Noble. REGIONAL.

★Sunday, Dec. 13th, 5.40 p.m.: *King Lear*, by Shakespeare. Production: Creswell. NATIONAL. 9.5 p.m.: Orchestral Concert. Boccherini, Debussy, Cesar Frank. Conductor: Boult. REGIONAL.

Monday, Dec. 14th, 7.20 p.m.: *Entertainment Parade* Production: Watt and Henson. NATIONAL. 8.0 p.m.: *Carnival*, by Compton Mackenzie. Production: Creswell. REGIONAL.

★Tuesday, Dec. 15th, 8.0 p.m.: *Harry Hopeful's Reunion.* Production: Bridson. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Dec. 16th, 10.35 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Trinity House.* Production: Morrow. NATIONAL.

Friday, Dec. 18th, 8.30 a.m.: Second Test Match, from Sydney. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Dec. 19th, 9.20 p.m.: Music Hall. Will Hay. NATIONAL.

Sunday, Dec. 20th, 9.5 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Tschiffeley's Ride.* Production: Gilliam. NATIONAL.

Monday, Dec. 21st, 8.30 p.m.: *Men from the Other Side.* All American cast. Production: Sieveking REGIONAL.

★Tuesday, Dec. 22nd, 9.0 p.m.: *Pageant of Pantomime.* Presented by M. Willson Disher. Production: Ernest Longstaffe. REGIONAL.

★Wednesday, Dec. 23rd, 8.0 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra (D). Conductor: Adrian Boult. Eva Turner. NATIONAL.

Friday, Dec. 25th, 7.0 p.m.: *Christmas Party.* Production: Maschwitz. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Dec. 26th, 2.30 p.m.: *Hansel and Gretel*, Acts 1 and 2, from Sadlers Wells. NATIONAL.

Sunday, Dec. 27th, 6.55 p.m.: *The Shadow.* Anderson Dillon. Production: Burnham. NATIONAL. 9.5 p.m.: Coleridge Programme. Production: Bridson. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Dec. 31st, 8.15 p.m.: Coliseum Pantomine. REGIONAL. 11.0 p.m.: New Year's Eve Programme. Production: Felton. NATIONAL.

TELEVISION MAKES ITS BOW

Exclusive to W.F.N.

This story is written by the only journalist present at the rehearsals for the first transmission of the Television Picture Page

Television came on the air officially at 3 p.m. on November 2nd. This was an historic occasion, the public was told by R. C. Norman, chairman of the B.B.C., and by Lord Selsdon, chairman of the Television Advisory Committee. Major G. C. Tryon, Postmaster-General, also one of the speakers, stated that the Government was confident that the Corporation would devote themselves with energy, wisdom and zeal to developing television broadcasting in the best interests of the nation.

The programme first given on Baird was repeated on Marconi-E.M.I. The latter system seemed to be less headache-making than the first, but there was little distinction.

The television camera made its debut with a grand trucking shot which revealed four minute figures sitting at a table. It followed with close-ups of the speakers and once or twice made tentative panning shots between faces. The close-ups gave partially recognisable features but in long-shot the speakers were unrecognisable.

The television screen is about 13 inches by 8 inches and reflects the top of a cathode-ray tube. Quite the most astounding feature of television was disclosed by the tuning-in process. This revealed as *hors d'œuvre*, Fischinger-like abstract moving designs, some of them very beautiful, all of them more fascinating than the meat and drink that followed. At times one was almost deceived into thinking them intentional. Perhaps some method of control may be devised by which this phenomenon can be utilised for back-ground title effects in film; for films of the Colour Box class and for screen trailers.

In addition to several speeches the inaugural broadcast carried the Movietone News, someone singing a song about television and a couple of wise-crackers. Notable in the last item was a close-up of the feet and legs of a tap-dance interlude. (The television camera can snap into close-up from long-shot by the pressing of a button.) The filmed sequences came over extremely well and with good definition, except in the extreme long-shots. But, on the whole, one would rather go round the corner to a movie theatre and see the real thing without eye-strain.

It seems that television can show satisfactorily only close-ups until it is possible to enlarge the screen size.

OPENING-DAY PROGRAMME

The history of television was outlined at the evening programme on the opening day when a film made by Dallas Bower came over. In the film it appears that Alexandra Palace had been gutted to accommodate the needs of machinery, staff and studios; that untold manual labour, research, technical skill and genius had been utilised and that as a result a lady is able to sing a song about television and be seen singing it.

After the film the air was cleared for the *pièce de resistance*, the Television Picture Page.

But first a word about the studio at Alexandra Palace.

A number of arc lamps and spot-lights scattered the floor. The set consisted of a naked piece of floor over which hung a microphone. Moveable backgrounds (*i.e.*, a Union Jack) were available. The props were: (1) a fake telephone switchboard; (2) a large album containing on separate sheets the titles for each programme item and credit-titles for the systems used. A glassed-in gallery near the ceiling accommodated the sound operators, a similar contraption on the floor houses the famous camera that shoots, develops and prints film in 40 seconds. The camera was trained on the fake switchboard and the telephone girl who introduces the items of the Picture Page. A camera on a truck occupied the key position on the floor. Part of one wall was occupied by an imposing array of switches, fuses and iron-work and many more of these installations were to be seen through doorways.

REHEARSAL

Scattered around the floor were three urchins with a "guy" (Guy Fawkes item); the Lord Mayor's coachman in gold and brocade; a television hostess with green lips and eye-shading; Miss Kay Stammers; Cecil Madden, the Picture Page editor on the run; an assortment of hostesses and announcers with yellowed faces and a number of technicians in linen coats.

A murmur of polite conversation filled the studio. There was a very polite request for silence framed in excellent English and in the hush someone shouted "What the hell is that . . . camera doing in the middle of the set?" This was followed by breathed remonstrations, "old man's" and a sense of recovering from a severe shock. Finally, the whistle blew, the rehearsals were on, and spectators were cleared from the studio.

Jim Mollison was first on the Picture Page programme. He had not rehearsed. The programme went something like this: *Girl at the switchboard:* Brrrrr. Who did you say you wanted to see. Why, yes, I think I can show you Mr. Mollison. He has just flown the Atlantic you know. Here you are. Brrrrrr. You are looking at the one and only Jim Mollison.

Announcer: What speed were you making on the trip?

Mollison (beaming happily, and clutching for the announcer's sheet of paper—not visible): Why, you've got it written down there.

(The announcer not nonplussed. Mr. Mollison obviously enjoying himself. A few more questions; more clutchings. The battle of question and answer goes on for a few seconds; Mollison squinting at the announcer's paper; giving it up; the announcer both asking and answering.)

Mollison (finally): I've been to so many parties lately I really can't remember.

Brrrrrr. Brrrrrr. Brrrrrr.

Jim Mollison was a success. The rehearsed items were less so. They followed the style of the *In Town Tonight* broadcasts with the telephone girl saying her piece in between. The urchins and the guy did their trespassing act, Kay Stammers answered a few questions; Alexander Shaw talked about his film trip to Australia; the Lord Mayor's coachman and the television hostesses did their turns; George Whitelaw did some lightning sketches and Algernon Blackwood told ghost stories. The last-named item was the only one with any note of originality. Here the lighting of the story-teller's face was so arranged as to add considerably to the spooky atmosphere of the stories.

Congratulations are certainly due to the Television staff for the easy switch-overs from item to item and for the courage to put over at least one item unrehearsed. It is to be hoped that programme restrictions and general tightening up will not eliminate the personal and human element from television as they have tended to do from broadcasting. One realises that a good deal of organisation and plan is necessary and as this becomes a matter of course the people in charge should be wary of the safe and commonplace and take a chance once in a while. Television offers enormous scope for ingenuity. M. A. T.

The Press says—

Brilliant, sharply defined, and absolutely steady close-ups were seen of Major G. C. Tryon, the Postmaster-General, who performed the ceremony; Mr. R. C. Norman, chairman of the B.B.C.; Lord Selsdon, chairman of the Television Advisory Committee, and other speakers.

—Daily Telegraph

Nothing to choose between the two systems on film transmission—some superiority of the E.M.I. system in the televising of Adele Dixon and Buck and Bubbles. . . . On the set on which I was viewing hardly a hitch. A tendency to oscillate the cheeks of the P.M.G. on one system; a tendency towards waving his hair on the other—but that was all.

. . . I have watched it with interest for two hours. . . . I have a bad headache.

—Daily Express

There was no technical hitch in the whole progamme, which was transmitted from a studio draped with black velvet and brilliantly illuminated by arc lights. The faces of the official speakers tended to appear too pale because they used no make-up.

—Daily Mail

As seen on the small screen of a receiver in a studio at Broadcasting House, the inaugural ceremony was more successful than those previously unacquainted with the achievements of television had expected. There was less flickering and more sharpness of detail in the second transmission of speakers at the opening ceremony than in the first, but in the transmission of the news events and the variety items there appeared to be little to choose between the two systems.

—The Times

All four speakers televised well, despite the lack of make-up, and at the end of this formal opening ceremony there was a programme of film news items.

. . . Both systems were successful.

—News-Chronicle

Lines and flicker were much more noticeable with the Baird system than with the E.M.I., while tones were slightly less contrasting on the E.M.I. This difference in tones, however, is less noticeable than a short time ago.

—Kinematograph Weekly

In Town Tonight

Old and New Versions

On NOVEMBER 18TH, 1932, *In Town Tonight* made its bow to the listening public. The idea of the programme originated with Eric Maschwitz, B.B.C. Variety Director. His plan was a series of snappy interviews with visiting celebrities.

By the time the seventh edition went on the air Maschwitz realised that a celebrity was not necessarily an ace broadcaster. Accordingly he broadened the original scheme. To help out his stammering stars he added a quota of buffoons, picturesques and eccentrics. And shortly afterwards he handed the programme over to A. W. Hanson.

Hanson, disturbed at the lack of logic which might lead from a Rumanian actress to a croupier to a jellied-eels merchant, rechristened the programme *Saturday Magazine*. In the analogy to a week-end journal he sought to cover scrappiness and allow himself agility. "Turn over the next page," accompanied by a skid up the harp—and the feather-dyer to Her Late Majesty was gracefully replaced by the oldest surviving horse-bus driver. "Contrast," declared Hanson, "that is the important thing." And contrast has dominated the programme ever since.

The passion for contrast has led to unfortunate results. It has led to a pre-occupation with the past. Ardent listeners to the programme glimpsing the driver of a bansom high above the taxis of Piccadilly, idly wonder whether he had yet seen the inside of the *In Town Tonight* studio, and if not, when his turn will inevitably come. It has led also to a grotesque distortion of the present. Here is an extract from the script of the sixty-first edition:—

Fade in snatch of . . . "Pomp and Circumstance" record.

Announcer: "The first coach to appear in the Jubilee processional route on Tuesday will be that of the Speaker of the House of Commons. This historic vehicle will be driven by a 60-year-old drayman from a city brewery.

Flick 6B for Hart to commence.

During last few words flick 6A for the "May Queen."

Announcer: "Here is the May Queen of Hastings and her attendants with Miss Dorothy Catt, who organised the ceremony."

. . . Fade in "Fingal's Cave" record. . . .

Announcer: "From the lonely island of Tristan de Cunha comes Donald Glass . . ."

. . . Fade in Handel's "Water Music" . . .

Announcer: "Mr. Phelps, the King's Bargemaster . . ."

. . . Fade in "Sons of the Brave" . . .

Announcer: "Here is Miss Jean Batten, who arrived . . ."

A coachman, a May Queen, an inhabitant of a remote islet, a Royal Bargemaster, and a female aviator. Hanson is certainly justified in his recent statement that he seeks only "unusual occupations."

Hanson has two strong points in his favour. *In Town Tonight* is a weekly programme and the stress of weekly production is not to be underestimated. Again, the programme goes on the air at 7.30 p.m. on Saturdays, a peak-hour for the listener demanding relaxation and entertainment. No one can accuse him of not serving his Saturday night audience faithfully. The scanty gauges of listening opinion show a genuine appreciation of his work.

But maybe in his search for material he casts his net too wide. Maybe some of his vast audience might like to hear something of people similar to themselves. Perhaps even more striking and entertaining material is lying unused under the producer's nose. While the unusuals of *In Town Tonight* are explaining their strange jobs to the microphone, there is a man in the bowels of the B.B.C. standing by the whirling fans of the plant which supplies their studio with conditioned air. It might be that five minutes of him would prove even more dramatic to 20 million people than the reminiscences of a jellied-eels merchant.

The Ministry of Labour publishes a list of the normal employments of industry and commerce. It is as thick as a dictionary and contains many thousands of classified occupations. The sober vocation-titles are shot through with the living drama of skill and tradition. And most of these people are in town every night.

ROBBER SYMPHONY REVISED

The Robber Symphony, which has already been seen in London, was recognised by the critics as an unusual and interesting film, and was awarded a medal at the International Film Congress at Venice this year. It has now been shortened, and thereby much improved, for its provincial release, and, incidentally, the pretentious and silly description, "the first composed film," has been dropped from all the announcements.

It remains still an exceedingly odd film. Friedrich Feher, who "directed and composed" it, is firstly a musician, secondly the glorifier of Hans Feher, the boy-hero, and only thirdly and as it were incidentally, a celluloid merchant (to borrow a useful and honourable phrase from St. John Ervine). This makes for oddness from the beginning, but it is nothing beside the fantastic rigmarole of a story, which could only have been held together by the greatest narrative skill. When it is added that the cast includes representatives of probably at least six nationalities, all speaking (though at rare intervals) with strong foreign accents, and all except one looking for the most part very self-conscious indeed, it will be evident that only some unforeseen fluke can explain the success of the film, if indeed it can be accounted by normal standards a success at all.

The music, which is impressively played by a large orchestra, is pleasant, if not particularly original. Sometimes, with its leaning towards the Viennese waltz idiom and its elaborate orchestration, one is reminded a little of the early Richard Strauss.

Nevertheless, the wide-eyed innocence of the whole thing and the beauty of the photographs of the Tyrol, the Côte d'Azur, and the high Alps make it imperative that you should see it. One cannot be impatient with a film that is so continuously lovely to look upon, however provoking it may be technically; and nothing could be more beguiling than the naturalness of the chubby, grave-eyed boy who is the hero of these preposterous adventures. We forget the complicated farrago of robbers' gangs and hidden money-bags with the charming originality of the scene of the boy waking up to find himself on top of a mechanical piano, a dog on one side of him and a donkey on the other, all of them—boy, piano, dog and donkey—on a barge adrift in unknown waters. Altogether, the film has a child's busy-ness about its nonsense, with never any time to pause on an effect, and a freshness at the farthest remove from the cloying, synthetic whimsy of a Barrie, which is constantly eyeing the audience into submissive giggling.

So when you go to see it, as you must, take a child with you. But forbid any talking until it's over: questions about the plot are rather hard to answer; and at the end there will only be time for praise.

J. H. B.

A new film on Switzerland

in preparation by Cavalcanti

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BRINGS THIS COUNTRY TO YOU BY PROVIDING "ALL IN" TRAVEL AT THE CHEAPEST POSSIBLE RATE

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PEOPLE WITH PURPOSES

Different Films—Different Salesman

A revolution in sales technique recently appeared in the U.S.A.

WARDOUR STREET, WARDOUR STREET, stony-hearted Wardour Street . . . or is it? A moment ago, all that seemed to matter was the jingle of easy money. The cold eye of the showman appraised the sucker on the sidewalk and anything from the fat lady to the wild man of Borneo served if the sucker could be prevailed upon to fall for it. The fat lady of course assumed the fair proportions of the Dietrich and the wild man from Borneo was tamed till only the slight and attractive gawkiness of Gary Cooper remained. The cold eye persisted. The fall guy was the heart of the business.

To-day we have *Pasteur*, *David Copperfield*, *Mary of Scotland*, *Rembrandt*, *Tale of Two Cities*, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *I, Claudius*, *Fury*, *Crime and Punishment*, *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet*. Something is happening. It appears to be almost more important than anything that has happened in the history of cinema—more important even than the coming of sound. The producer is making an appeal to the intelligence. The synthetic build-up of adventure, romance and the happy ending remains, but in a relatively high proportion the producers are taking the audience seriously.

It is going to be interesting to see what changes this policy of the producers will work on the renters and salesmen of Wardour Street. They caught the eye of the sucker brilliantly; they whisked him into the synthetic wonders of romance and adventure and the happy ending with the genius of the "con" man tradition they came out of. The loud speakers of their salesmanship, and the blare of their publicities had a certain attraction.

Will the same salesmanship do for *Romeo and Juliet? Will the same salesman do?* "Boy meets girl . . ." says the programme. It is salesmanship with the old accent but the type is clean and fresh and a great deal of Shakespeare is in the film.

In America some strange things happened in the selling of *Romeo and Juliet*. For the first time, on a mass scale, new avenues of contact with the public were sought. The publicity men were supplemented by public relations men. A short film was made on the life of Shakespeare and circulated to the schools to draw attention to the oncoming film. The women's organisations were mobilised from end to end of the continent and asked to demonstrate their interest. The latent audience beyond the fans was mobilised to support the new cinema. This adventure in advanced salesmanship, it is reported, met with astonishing success.

The "March of Time" has pursued a similar policy in the United States and has already begun to follow up its American technique in this country. It gets in touch with organisations which may be interested in a particular topic raised by its monthly reel and keeps contact with leaders of opinion.

Like every other great industry or government department the film trade is learning that ballyhoo is not the whole of salesmanship and that good civic relations are also profitable ones.

In a recent address Mr. Simon Rowson maintained that a great new public has still to be brought into the cinema. He has suggested the formation of a public relations front for Wardour Street. The same possibility was raised by Sir Arnold Wilson during the discussions of the Moyne Committee. Sir Charles Higham, speaking at a Cinematograph Exhibitions Association luncheon the other day, raised the matter again when he recommended the film people to advertise as an industry and ask people to buy pictures as they are now asked to buy fish or fruit. He proposed a "Go-to-the-pictures" campaign.

The public relations front is coming, but more simply. It is coming out of the sales necessities of the new films. They are different, and American sales example demonstrates that they are going to be sold differently. Ambitions at the production end are going to be matched by new efforts at the sales end, when the salesmen have had time to learn from their American colleagues. The mobilisation of the public in new ways will be part of the process. Mr. Meynell has talked of the difference between the American shout and the quiet voice. It is the American, curiously enough, who is introducing the quiet voice.

One aspect of the new sales methods in America is that Metro Goldwyn and "March of Time" are using film circulation in the non-theatrical fields to promote interest in their theatrical circulation. They are sending films to the schools and the clubs that they may bring in audiences to the theatres. In this they are following the examples of industries like oil and gas, commercial organisations like the Metropolitan life, and departments like the Post Office. If they develop as they have begun we may yet see the non-theatrical field of the cinema as an essential factor in the salesmanship and propaganda of Wardour Street. This non-theatrical circulation is now held to be a threat to the commercial cinema. It would be interesting if it turns out to be an opportunity—and an ally.

Conservative C.O. Reports—

The value of the cinematograph film as a medium for political propaganda has been recognised for a long time past by those responsible for propaganda on behalf of the National Government. Since 1929 the Conservative Central Office has possessed a fleet of mobile sound vans which tour the constituencies throughout Great Britain, giving film displays by day or night in market places, at street corners, and on village greens.

Each unit is equipped with a full size cinema sound projector, and the films are projected on the screen which is fixed at the rear of the van.

Experience has shown the great value of this form of propaganda both in towns and villages. The displays attract larger audiences than can be obtained by the ordinary street corner political orator, and—what is even more important still—outdoor entertainments of this character have the advantage that the audiences consist of people of all types holding varying political opinions.

The programmes usually consist of films of different types—entertainment, amusement, and propaganda. Short speeches by Cabinet Ministers are usually shown, and the film has been found to be an excellent medium for bringing home to people the remarkable industrial recovery which this country has made during the past five years.

In addition to the large travelling vans which can give film entertainments out of doors, there are a number of smaller vans equipped with 16mm. portable talkie projectors capable of giving shows in halls whether equipped with electric light or not.

A review of the campaigns conducted by these two fleets of cinema vans show that during the months prior to the last General Election the total audiences aggregated well over a million and a half people. When account is taken of the fact that visual propaganda as conveyed by the film probably has a more lasting effect than the spoken word, the value of this type of propaganda can be appreciated at its full worth.

* * *

Mr. R. Kingston-Davies is touring Tanganyika, Nyasaland, Kenya, and Uganda in order to make cinematograph films illustrating the geographical conditions of the countries and how crops are raised. The films are intended for exhibition in Britain for educational purposes. In Tanganyika it is intended to photograph the production of sisal in its various stages, and also to visit the Lupa goldfield.

Are your CIGARETTES* as popular as MYRNA LOY?

Why not? You can use the same medium—the sound film. We can put your product on the screen in a way which will make it acceptable to an audience in its most receptive mood.

* *OR YOUR BISCUITS, OR YOUR MOTOR CARS, OR WHATEVER YOU MANUFACTURE.*

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CANADA

Canada Calling

PIONEERS

The Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, Ottawa, Canada, founded in 1917, is to-day the largest and best equipped Governmental film unit in the world. The films produced tell the story of Canada's romance and development and cover Canada from every national aspect—agriculture, lumbering, fisheries, sports, the scenic beauties of the Canadian Rockies, cities, and many other aspects of Canadian endeavour.

FREE FILM SERVICE

An extensive library of these Canadian films is maintained in the United Kingdom and they are available, free of charge, to educational authorities, institutions, public organisations, schools, churches, etc., interested in the dissemination of knowledge of Canada.

In the London area only, organisations as noted in the preceding paragraph may also obtain, free, the services of projection equipment, films, screen and operator.

FOR FULL PARTICULARS PLEASE MAKE APPLICATION TO THE

Director of Canadian Trade Publicity in Great Britain,
Canadian Building, Blackburn Road, London, N.W.6

News Review

The Scottish Travel Association, 2 North Charlotte Street, Edinburgh, announces that its library of miniature scenic films will be available this winter for loan to *bona fide* amateur cinematographers and film clubs. Additions to the collection this year include a film showing a holiday in a motor yacht, one each on grouse shooting and deer stalking, and two in colour (Kodachrome) of the City of Aberdeen and the County of Stirlingshire respectively.

* * *

A new film of Knaresborough which has been produced by Mr. H. Collinson for the Urban District Council, was praised at its first public screening in the Town Hall, Knaresborough. The programme also included a production of Knaresborough's events of the year, made by Mr. G. Mann.

* * *

Propaganda films for the milk industry have been frequent in the past 18 months and several more are now in course of production. The Scottish Milk Marketing Board has almost completed a film to advertise milk in cinemas throughout Scotland. A unit from Publicity Films Ltd. is now engaged in the shooting of a colour film of the milk industry for the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

* * *

Included in the £200,000 development scheme of John Rubin Limited, the big Liverpool store, are plans for a 250-seater cinema. Advertising films on 16-mm. stock will be shown in this cinema. They will deal with the products of the store and will be used to augment the personal salesmanship of the staff.

* * *

Ealing Corporation electricity undertaking is advertising on the screens of the local Odeon and Walpole cinemas.

* * *

L.M.S. employees are receiving instruction in railway work by means of films shown in a special L.M.S. film coach which has now travelled 18,000 miles, visiting 40 towns.

* * *

Meadow to Market, a short talkie film describing New Zealand meat industry, has been prepared under the direction of the New Zealand Meat Producers Board for use in publicity campaigns in this country.

* * *

Southport Publicity and Attractions Committee have co-operated with the L.M.S. Railway Company in the production of two films. One shows Southport as a winter resort and the other, in colour, depicts the summer attractions of the town. Both films are to be circulated throughout the Railway Company's film library for exhibition to members of clubs and societies.

* * *

L.M.S. Railway Company are giving an exhibition of films to their staff at Stoke on October 21st. The films will show what happens to an engine between journeys, men and women of the L.M.S. and their children at play, the L.M.S. newsreel for 1936, and a film depicting the work of the famous West Coast postal train.

* * *

In order to build up a library of music suitable for use in its travel films, and also to provide opportunities for local composers, the Tourist and Publicity Department of the Government of New Zealand is offering to use New Zealand compositions if such are found suitable.

It is proposed to make story-films with simple themes of an outdoor nature on New Zealand's life, scenery, and sport. Manuscripts of this type, which need not be in scenario form, may be submitted to the Government Advertising Studio, Darlington Road, Wellington, N.Z.

* * *

Bookings are now in hand for *The Wee Blue Blossom*, a new film sponsored by the Irish Linen Guild of Belfast.

Produced by Publicity Films Limited, the film tells the story of this old Irish weaving industry in a general survey of the stages through which the flax plant must pass before it reaches fulfilment in the form of Irish linen. The film is directed by John Alderson and photographed by Walter Blakeley. Characteristic Irish airs have been used in the specially arranged music which accompanies the film throughout; while an informative commentary describes the weaving process in detail.

* * *

An increasing number of travel magazines are featuring Ireland's attractions as a holiday centre. Now comes the report that the Irish Tourist Association Film Unit has just completed its first season's work. The Unit was started with the object of making tourist propaganda and documentary films in order to further the Association's work and to promote world-wide interest in Ireland. Naturally, it has been impossible to cover the entire country in one season's work but sufficient material for three short pictures has been gathered, and also a quantity of "library" shots.

Market-day Film Shows

A circuit of Market-day Film Shows has been planned by Western Electric to operate between October and April in three hundred of the principal market towns of England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

These have been chosen as representing the largest drawing centres of important rural and agricultural districts. Selection is based on statistical and other information from the official reports of the Ministry of Agriculture, supplemented by careful study on the ground of local conditions.

At each town a continuous performance of films of agricultural and rural interest, specially produced by firms of repute interested in the agricultural market, will be given on Market Day. Admission to the performances will be free and showings will be held in selected halls adjoining the market. In these halls Western Electric portable talking picture equipment, in the charge of expert operators, will be installed.

Facilities are provided for literature or business reply cards, etc., bearing on the featured products to be available to members of the audience on leaving the hall.

Cotton Queen

Manchester's cotton mills will come to the screen in the new feature picture *Cotton Queen*, which is being directed by Bernard Vorhaus at the Rock studios, Elstree. Will Fyffe, Stanley Holloway and Mary Lawson play leading parts and the supporting cast includes Donald Calthrop, Helen Haye and Syd Courtenay, who was also responsible for the story.

* * *

For the past five years the Overseas League has been building up a film distribution machine among school children and with the help of the various Dominion Governments, the G.P.O. film unit and the Empire Film Library they have shown films to five thousand children per week. The films are on Empire subjects and have educational value. The programmes are especially selected for children from 10 to 16 years of age.

* * *

Gaumont-British Equipments are engaged at present in the production of films for Messrs. Wedgwood Ltd., Fry's, Empire Tea Marketing Bureau, International Combustion Ltd., Avery's Scale Manufacturing Company, Anglo-American Oil Company, and Player's Tobacco.

THE STRAND FILM COMPANY LTD

Producers of Documentary, Educational,
Propaganda, Publicity, and Training Films.

37-39 Oxford Street London W.1. Gerrard 3122-3-4

Production Notes

Jack Holmes is completing cutting of *The Way to the Sea*, a film of electrification of railway transport, which also deals with the history of the Royal road. Britten is writing the music and Auden has been engaged to do part of the commentary.

* * *

Strand have two more London films on the way: *People in the Park* and *London Wakes Up*. This series is being produced under Paul Rotha's supervision.

* * *

Shooting has commenced on *The Future's in the Air*, which is being produced by Alex Shaw, at Sharjah in the Persian Gulf.

* * *

Strand plan to make during the coming year a series of six films on London's museums. Museums included, it is hoped, will be the London, Science, British, Natural History and the Victoria & Albert. In each case, the work that goes on behind the scenes will be shown and an indication of the value of museums will be given.

* * *

Britain's Wind Tunnel for testing aircraft has been filmed by Stanley Hawes for display at the International Aero Exhibition in New York. The architecture of the Tunnel dwarfs any scenes taken in Mr. Korda's epic *Things to Come*, and, although the film is a straight instructional, the beauty of the machinery makes it an exciting picture.

* * *

Mary Field is now engaged in the production of a series of films based on the cattle industry in this country. This series will take its place in the Empire Film Survey, now in course of production by G.B.I. Sixteen one-reel subjects and two documentary films will be made in connection with this survey from material recently "shot" in the West Indies.

Kingsley Wood on Physical Education

Sir Kingsley Wood, Minister of Health, introducing a showing of Gaumont-British Instructional films on physical education, said that besides giving entertainment to many at a moderate price, the cinema had placed in the hands of those with imagination an unrivalled means of spreading information and imparting instruction. Moreover, educational films could be, in their own way, as good entertainment as the ordinary productions of Hollywood.

The first of the films, *Carriage*, pointed out that the normal child spent seven hours a day sitting, and eight hours moving, and demonstrated correct postures.

Both *Girls' Summer Games* and *Analysis of Agility* fell short of the standard set by the preceding film, but the two on swimming, *Crawl* and *Breaststroke*, were brilliant examples of the use to which the film can be put. They analysed each movement by slow motion and under-water photography.

Meynell Asks for English Standards —not American—in Film Advertising

"18,500,000 people paid admission to the cinemas in the British Isles every week (in 1934). Does not this figure prove that we are a cinema-conscious nation?" said Roy Simmonds, Publicity Director of Fox Films, at a recent meeting of the Publicity Club of London. Walter Buchanan-Taylor was chairman, and other speakers were Francis Meynell of Gaumont-British and Eric Dunstar of *The Star*.

Roy Simmonds said that the sponsors of the "See more films" campaign were saying in effect, "We made the public drink more beer, eat more bananas, and swallow more milk, and now we are going to make them see more Garbo!" The days were over when people went to the cinema merely as a habit. To-day they "shopped" for their entertainment, paying money to see a particular star.

The continual use of the word "colossal" in film advertising reminded him of the star who said to another, "Wasn't I colossal in that picture?" to which the reply was, "Why, yes, colossal in a small way."

He gave the following publicity tips:

"In preparing your advertising budget always put the newspapers first.

"In designing your lay-out, always remember the three essentials—the stars, the title, the theatres. All else is subsidiary and embroidery.

"If you are appealing to the masses, don't go over their heads and appeal to the few. There is no necessity for film advertising to be vulgar, but it can still be forceful and 'punchy.'

"Film critics see about 300 films a year. Can you wonder they sometimes suffer from cinematic indigestion?"

Francis Meynell, whose telegraphic address Mr. Buchanan-Taylor suggested should be "Versatility London," made a plea for the adoption of modern English standards in the advertising of films. At present, he said, even English films followed American precedents.

"American pictures arrive in England complete with their advertising campaigns. They are not designed to appeal to a West End public, though it is to this public that they will in fact be addressed. They are designed for a three-days run in the 'tank' towns of the Middle West. They use the excessive language of the quick-come, quick-go 'advance agent' of circus days. It takes a bold English representative of an American company to scrap the style laid down for him; for if the picture is a failure, his changes will be blamed. One Hollywood concern produced four pictures in one season of every one of which it said that it was 'the finest picture of this year—or any year.'

"Film audiences are not all of mental age eleven, nor are the films which are being made in Hollywood and Shepherd's Bush. But film advertising has failed to grow up. Its exaggerations are manifest, and its language unlike any that real people use. What Mrs. Jones really says to Mrs. Smith is: 'That is a good picture. I liked it.' What the advertisement is apt to make her say is: 'This picture plumbs emotion to its deepest depths.'

Eric Dunstan pointed out that what most producers want is not criticism but puffs, and what most films need is not puffs but criticism.

In the discussion that followed, Francis Meynell put a strong case for co-operative cinema advertising.

RAINBOW DANCE: Direction: Len Lye; Production: Wright and Cavalcarti.

First, it is unlike any other film. It is also unlike most other things. Unlike them, too, it relates. You can't say it "says" or it "shows" as plays, poems "say" and a painting, say, "shows." Those are, saying and showing, shorthand at second-hand for the thing itself—the thing behind the shock which gets into thought that finally gets into words. *Rainbow Dance* is that thing. That is the nearest I can get to saying what it does—authentic sight-shocks.

For the rest, it may be remarked that Lye uses a figure, a living figure, in silhouette, against object backgrounds, that the action is dance and that in method he uses those of his previous films plus. It may be further said that the figure is swept with light; it moves, turns at right-angles —into green-life, at corner, as it changes angle, enters red-life. This seemed to me like thinking. At another moment, the figure jumps—jumps up, reaches there, but leaves itself behind. Or some self. For various selves jump out at it jumps, from black figure starting to jump, red figure, itself a stage further, and from that a blue. Each a stage and a figure, but each part of the whole, the Jump. It is like talking, the moment when someone says something which makes you split—there is you listening, you thinking, you about to speak to other, and you that's not watching you. So that there are four of one's self, a row, for one second, sitting there. Seeing in Lye's film, this man split, this army of selves of different layers, is very beautiful and, like all perception, frightening. And there are no times when the picture, along with the maker's mind, sees to shift out of focus.

—Robert Herring, *Life and Letters To-day*

Historical Treatment of Hampstead Heath

A short documentary called *Happy Hampstead* has just been completed by Robin Pearce, manager of the Everyman Theatre, under the supervision of J. Fairfax Jones.

The film was made in Mr. Pearce's spare time moments and is his first effort in both direction and camerawork. The photography is consistently good, and the film has a refreshing atmosphere about it, which makes up for the somewhat superficial approach to the subject,

Apart from shots of the Heath itself, a good deal of interesting historical information is put across, and the film is in general efficiently and amusingly put together.

EXPERIMENT IN COLOUR

By LEN LYE

Rainbow Dance, *Len Lye's new colour film, represents an important step forward in the control of colour. The complex laboratory processes have not yet been completely mastered and* **Rainbow Dance** *seems less finished than* **Colour Box,** *but it indicates far greater possibilities in design and fantasy. Lye's theoretical notes are difficult but they will be evidence to students of experimental cinema, of the deep considerations which are involved in this artist's work.*

SYNOPSIS. A rainbow forms behind a man standing in a rainy City street. The rainbow changes him into a colour silhouette and his city clothes into a hiker's outfit. He sets off on holiday activities and dances in a fantasy of colour. The end slogan is "The P.O.S.B. puts a pot of gold at the end of the Rainbow." Tangible rainbows symbolise the general idea.

In this film the technical purpose was to use only the colours of the Gasparcolor film stock. These are pink, yellow, and blue dyes which exist in three layers on the film celluloid itself. (The pink, yellow, and blue of any image is protected by three black and white photographic records from the printing light.) The printing light "knocks out" the unprotected pink, yellow and blue dyes which are eventually dissolved or fixed in the laboratory tanks, according to which portions were exposed or unexposed to it.

The difference in colour technique for this film as compared with the shooting of a straight colour film is that all colour records were taken as separate films. No colour was used on the sets, where every object was painted in terms of black and white. For instance, a green hill (a "prop" hill) was painted white and photographed continuously for the red record, painted dark grey and photographed for the yellow record, painted a light grey, and finally photographed for the blue record. This meant the hill was split into three records for the required densities of the pink, yellow and blue dyes of the Gasparcolor film stock. A silhouette of a man was superimposed over each colour record in densities according to the dye required for his colour.

This method of colour control meant that our colour would be clean and not suffer from any opacity of photographic colour light. In other words, an artist separated the colours instead of leaving it to the colour filters. So that all colours for the objects were pure colours achieved without the necessity of reproducing colours of different pigmentation by the colour dyes of the film stock.

Although a strong sensation of colour-flow was attempted in both the films *Colour Box* and *Rainbow Dance* there are differences in technical and pictorial treatment between the two. *Colour Box* was painted straight on to the film celluloid and printed in the Dufay colour system direct from this 'master'; *Rainbow Dance* is a combination of black and white photographic records equalling densities of colour which are printed on Gasparcolor film stock. In pictorial treatment, the differences lie in the use of colour. Colour was used in *Colour Box* in an objective way, and in *Rainbow Dance* in a subjective way.

In *Colour Box* the colour was 'on the surface' in an arabesque of colour design (apparently motivated by the light arabesque quality of the simple dance music it accompanied). Whatever movement occurred was colour movement alone.

In *Rainbow Dance* the colour is used in a 'spatial' way so that it comes up to the eye or recedes from it or vanishes and re-appears in definite colour rhythms. In fact, colour is made to turn inside out in movement regardless of the movement of the object or objects on which it is seen. Here the colour movement is a form of counterpoint to the movement of the object carrying the colour—often this counterpoint of colour-flow dominates the movement of the object to such an extent that the object becomes merely an element of the colour movement, instead of the usual circumstance of colour being merely an element in an object enacting a strong literary role. In other words, the colour movement dominates all other movement, *both* pictorial and cinematic.

This new form of colour planning necessitates a new approach to criticism, which cannot be based on standards already established in relation to black and white film tempo.

A tabulation of the aspects of colour treatment established in RAINBOW DANCE:—

1. Three dimensional colour-flow between the colour of moving objects and their background—
   e.g., a hiker changes colour in a natural colour setting of a hilly countryside until the colour is abruptly drained out of the hills, a marbled map appearing in the sky, and the man altering colour to accent the background change—
2. The investing of straight black and white film shots with unnatural colour to emphasise any fantasy element it was desired to associate with those shots—
   e.g., successive sea shots were invested with colour so that greens, purples and blues changed the sea into intense sunny, twilight and underwater scenes in which hand-painted fish and yachts appear. The shots of seas were used to convey colour form—
3. The colour in a moving object changing in spatial depths of intensity without the moving object in which it is contained shifting in its dimensional plane—
   e.g., a man in movement, contained in a few square yards, undergoes changes of colour densities that indicate changes of depth from foreground to infinity. The colour focus, although remaining sharp in definition, is at one moment ranged at 'nearness,' in the next is ranged on 'infinity' with the man and the background remaining on a steady spatial plane.
4. Coloured objects splitting up into parts of themselves so that they become echoes of their movement and dominant colour—
   e.g., a man jumping through the air leaves successive images of himself behind, which retain elements of his colour and when the images disappear he assumes a different colour.
5. Pure colour sensation—
   e.g., rainbow shapes float upwards in movement while the divisions of colour alternate exactly in time to strong rhythmic music. Vibrant colour spots are then fluttered over the rainbows to create further sensational stimuli.
6. 'Sour' colour is used as an offset to bright 'saturation' of colour—
   e.g., natural black and white shots of a girl's head were falsified by using negative densities of the photo which were then invested with muddy browns and neutral colours to intensify the brightness of the rainbows which succeed this scene.

Goldwyn and Korda Patrons of Art

says Mary Borden

"I don't think I believe in entertainment that doesn't entertain, any more than I trust a chair that can't be sat in," said Miss Mary Borden, the novelist, in her address at the *Sunday Times* Book Exhibition. "During the Renaissance every artist was a craftsman, and had to make his living by knowing his job. Nowadays the Sam Goldwyns and the Alexander Kordas are the patrons of art, and cameramen and writers are given every opportunity to show what good craftsmen they are."

Only two qualifications were necessary to the film writer to-day, Miss Borden continued. First, he must know his job; second, he must be willing to co-operate with other people.

During her six months' work for Korda Miss Borden learned that the writer was no more important in the general scheme of the picture in production than anyone else connected with it. Hugh Walpole, who had worked at Hollywood on the script of *David Copperfield*, had said that he had been made to feel very small. But he did not seem to mind that, because as all novelists in film studios, he had been taught a great deal about the craft of writing.

"A novel," said Miss Borden, "is a story about a group of people who *do* something." This emphasis on the story aspect was essential to the film. The public, and not the literary critic nor the publisher, was the final judge of the completed work; and the public knew nothing about art. The public only knew what it wanted, and it wanted a story. The "tell us a story" of the nursery was the basis of the whole vast film industry, for a film was nothing more than a story told with pictures. Moreover, people would always want stories, and so for the novelist and for the scenario writer the story was the real thing, and everything must be cut away that was confusing to it. And if the story was simple enough for a child to understand, that did not detract from its value.

Finally, said Miss Borden, it was nonsense to talk about the disastrous effects of the film industry on the novel or the theatre, for it was a stimulus and a help to both. "My novels," she concluded, "will be better stories after my six months' work with Korda."

J. H. B.

RESULTS OF COMPETITION NO. 4 WILL APPEAR IN OUR JANUARY ISSUE

PRESERVING THE OLD FILMS

300 Films in National Library's collection

Except by accident no copy of any film is preserved for very long even in these enlightened days. Yet here is the raw material of history of the future. Obviously no firm of renters can afford to be such philanthropists as to clutter up their vaults with stuff that some of their children's children who are academically inclined may like to see. Yet the stuff ought to be preserved. Hence the National Film Library of the British Film Institute!

We have now three hundred films in the preservation section. Even these few form a very interesting record of the cinema from the late nineties to the present day. But there are tremendous gaps. We have just published a list of our most urgent wants and we will gladly send one to anybody who would like to see it, and if they have any of the items, would present it to us.

At the same time we will refuse nothing! We want films to preserve for posterity and we want good hard cash, since films take a lot of nursing if they are not to shrink or become brittle or get stained.

In America the Carnegie Corporation is supporting their National Film Library which is attached to the Museum of Modern Art. In England we have no such backing. May I appeal to all your readers to remember us before they cheerfully sign the order to 'junk the lot'? They may be doing a far, far better thing than they have ever done before! **OLIVER BELL**

The National Film Library of the British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1, has issued its first complete Catalogue of those films in its collection which are available in the Distribution Section. Of the 351 films in the Library which are being preserved to posterity, copies of 54 have been made because of their historical interest or intrinsic education value. For the convenience of prospective borrowers the Catalogue has been divided into sections wherein each film is fully described. The use of the Library is available to members of the Institute for use by Schools, Institutes, Educational Groups or by Film Societies, and copies may be had on application to the National Film Library, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

"Mill on the Floss" at Sound City

Films in production at Sound City studios, Shepperton have a distinctly British flavour. The most ambitious of the films under way is an £80,000 adaptation of George Eliot's novel *The Mill on the Floss*. John Drinkwater has written the dialogue, the stars include Frank Lawton, Mary Clare, Fay Compton and Victoria Hopper, and direction is in the hands of Tim Whelan. Three of the principal sets have cost £10,000.

* * *

John Stafford Productions have just completed two pictures: a spy story, *Second Bureau*, and *Wings Over Africa*, a drama of tropical exploration. Both pictures will be released by Radio. For showing during Coronation months a third Empire film has been prepared.

* * *

James Fitzpatrick is in the middle of a programme of twelve pictures for M.G.M. Among the completed ones are *The Captain's Table*, a sea story; and one on the life of David Livingstone. The next two pictures will deal with the life of Shakespeare and the loves of Robert Burns.

* * *

John Baxter has been going ahead with his national life films. Two recent ones deal with Cockney life and country life. The titles are *Abide with Me* and *Song of the Road*. The setting of the latter is in Sussex and Hampshire and the hero is played by Bransby Williams. Baxter is now in America looking for a story that will appeal to America as well as Britain.

* * *

Universal-Wainwright have recently made *The Secret of Stambul* with Frank Vosper.

M.O.T. NO. 4

HIGH SPOT OF NO. 4 issue of "March of Time" was an item on the British Tithe War, directed by Harry Watt. Town audiences were plainly startled by this revelation of ferment in the English countryside. The item spared none of the realities of this very real war, with its almost military system of attack and counterattack. Distraint auctions are sabotaged by the farmers with ludicrous bids, and police attempts to seize live stock are forestalled by espionage corps, despatch riders and lumbering carts which mysteriously amble across the roads to block the police vehicles.

The item leaves no doubt as to the determination of the farmers to fight against what they rightly consider an unjust and antiquated burden, and has been produced with a fine sense of the drama and action of the events.

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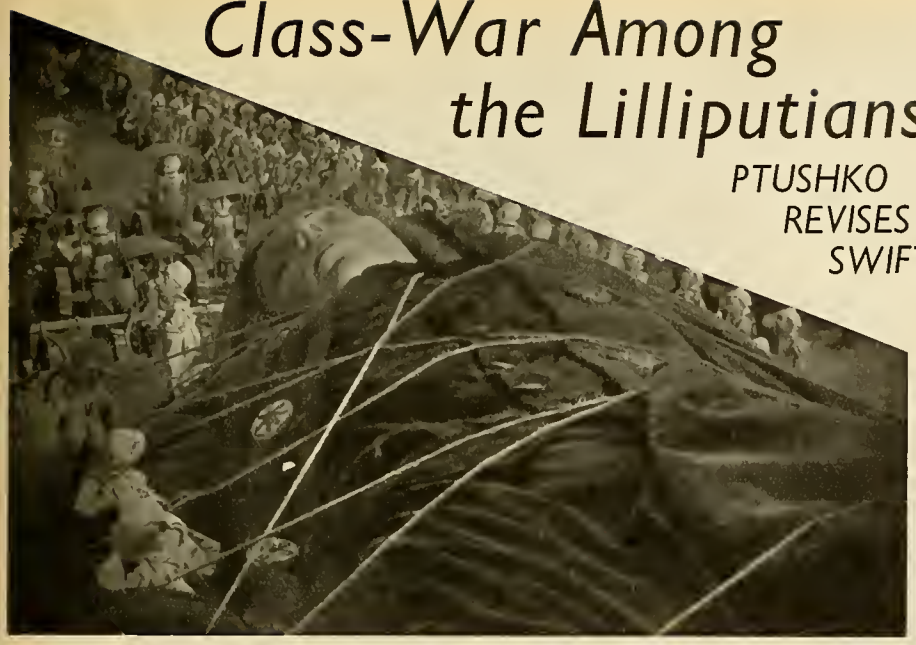
Class-War Among the Lilliputians

PTUSHKO REVISES SWIFT



by Felix Barker

THE New Gulliver, the Soyukino production opening the new season of the London Film Society, is the latest work of A. Ptushko, the Russian director and puppet master. Like Starevitch (*W.F.N.* October issue), Ptushko is an experimentalist in trick film making with animated puppets. Previously a cartoonist, he turned his attention five years ago to making satirical dolls for the films, and while this is his first film to be distributed widely outside Russia, he has made several others. Besides his shorts for children, the most notable of these were *The Bed Bug* and *Play and Work*.

It would be difficult to think of a better story than Swift's narrative of Gulliver's voyage to Lilliput for using puppets. In a story of fantasy no excuse would be necessary for them. They would be the perfect contrast in size and style to a human Gulliver. The trick photography such as was used for diminishing the people in *The Devil Doll* could never have given such opportunities for comic invention as the puppets. It gave Ptushko, besides, an opportunity of perfecting his new and original idea of manipulating the little people, a technical trick which he calls multiplication.

Multiplication is a method whereby, instead of the dolls moving as they would in an ordinary marionette show, the camera photographs innumerable shots of motionless figures in different positions. Very much in the method of the cartoon, movement in a cast of well over three thousand is effected by the minutest change in the position of the limbs. Twenty-five shots are needed to make a single lift of the arm. The principal characters, the King, his Prime Minister, and others have as many as three hundred interchangeable heads each with a slightly varying expression. There are also hand and body gestures appropriate to them.

This immense task has been the combined work of Ptushko, who originated all the models, Sarra Mokil who designed the puppets from his drawings, and of Olga Tayezhnaya, the sculptor. Also on the technical staff was the sound engineer, Korobov, who, among other things, was faced with the difficult task of scaling down the voices to the size of the dolls. This he did by raising the pitch to one and a half times higher than that of a human being.

That multiplication opens wide fields in the comic cinema is obvious to any who have seen the film. Photographing puppets, as with actors, has the advantage of suggesting the three dimensions, a thing the cartoon can never do. Yet the puppets have all the virtues of comic contortion peculiar to the cartoon figure. There is one memorable occasion when this is particularly shown. Crowds of Lilliputians are collecting to see the figure of the captive Gulliver. Some society ladies are watching a little way off. Suddenly the scream of a police car announces the arrival of the Chief of Police. Immediately the ladies crane forward and the neck of one shoots out like a telescope to six times its length, accompanied by a squeak of feminine curiosity.

Except for the prologue and epilogue there are no human beings in the film save the boy Gulliver played by V. Konstantinov. His adventures are based on Swift's story, and while this in itself, one would have thought, might have made an admirable film, the producers have seen fit to borrow the idea alone and build for themselves a story with propagandist ends. They have kept the eighteenth century dress for their characters, but the 'problem' is a modern one.

Vanya, a Young Pioneer, falls asleep during a reading of "Gulliver's Travels," and in his dreams is transported (after a very muddle sequence of pirate warfare) to the shores of Lilliput. For a short while Swift is discernible. But then propaganda rears its head and the original is obliterated by a story of civil strife between the worthless king of Lilliput, his worthless household, his worthless anti-social dynasty, and the Workers, the working pioneers, the working and suppressed masses. The new Gulliver sees his way clearly. He must help the Pioneers. He, therefore, throws in his gargantuan lot with the revolutionaries, and wins the war for them (Swift again) by dragging the fleet of ships away from the mainshore.

Fortunately Ptushko never lets his genius for satire be submerged by the propaganda. His characters, especially, are very witty commentaries on the types personified. One remembers such gems as the belligerent financier, and the dandy, and above all the King. The King is a figure of giggling immaturity, with a man's body, a child's mind, and an imbecile's face. He cannot even talk properly, and when he delivers an official speech, he does it by means of a gramophone concealed behind him. It is the propagandist's aim to satirize monarchy, but the film does not stop at that. Contemporary foibles are ruthlessly exposed. Perhaps the happiest of these is the crooner at an entertainment held for Gulliver. He warbles out the following inanity:

> "My Lil-li-put las-sie, Oh fly with me
> One min-ute to-ge-ther I ask of thee
> And we shall be then as care free as a bird
> in a nut-shell tree,
> My di-minu-tive dar-ling, My Lil-li-put lass.
>
> "My Lil-li-put las-sie, my di-minu-tive dear
> I hav-n't words classy and sweet in your ear
> So—la la la la la la la la la la la la la la
> My sweet demi-tas-se, My Lil-li-put dear."

In contrast are the Workers, who spend their time in dissatisfied labour in the mines of the kingdom. It is an unfortunate piece of symbolism on the part of Ptushko that all the workers should be exactly the same in appearance. The intention is obvious, but the result is only to show a collection of ciphers without individualism, drab and unattractive. The sprightly characters at court for all their worthlessness make far more agreeable companions.

Ptushko is an artist at heart. We can look forward to his next film, *The Blue Star*, a more serious, and, he insists, more intellectual piece of work.

Sherlock Holmes on a Bicycle

Among the trick films in the library of the British Film Institute there is one early German cartoon, *How Plimp and Plump Fooled the Detective*. It was produced by a Berlin company called Herman Ulks Tricks, and although there is no record of the exact date, it is more than likely that it was made before the war, since the collection of films of the donor, Harry Price, all belong to pre-war days.

The film shows the comic chase with horse, car and bicycle of two thieves. Sherlock Holmes, the pursuer, is shown complete with his famous pipe. Though the movement of the three characters is often slow and jerky, they seem to be forerunners of Max Fleischer's Pop-eye, and of later trick film characters of the jointed-cardboard family. The background is very detailed with shadows and the rough bark of trees drawn in such a way that the effect is that of a charcoal drawing. The figures are imposed upon the background. They too are drawn with a good deal of detail, and they are apparently mounted on cardboard with the head, jaw, arms and legs jointed in a manner similar to the silhouette figures of Lotte Reiniger. Judging from the general effect of the picture it is probable that the trick table used in the making of it was much the same as Miss Reiniger's. *Marie Seton*

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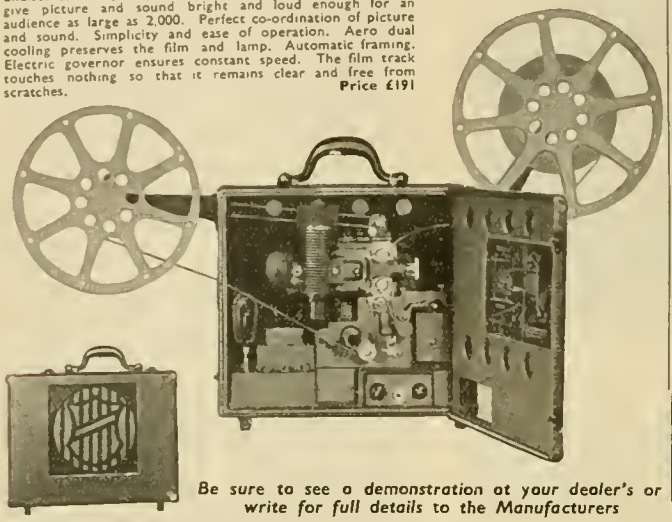

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The Empire Film Library was inaugurated by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester in 1935. Film productions of the late Empire Marketing Board and G.P.O. Film Unit are available in this Library for loan to schools and for approved displays by adult societies.

Recent additions include a number of 16 mm sound-on-film subjects dealing with scenery and wild game in the Empire.

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Two Hundred Studios Make School Films in Germany *by Marie Seton*

A Ufa exhibit showing pictures taken with various lenses

ACCORDING TO THE estimate of the Reichsfilmkammer there are two hundred companies producing educational and documentary films in Germany. Of these companies the largest and most important is the Ufa Documentary Department directed by Dr. Nicholas Kaufmann, which is responsible for about sixty pictures a year covering mathematics, physics, zoology, chemistry, and astronomy, as well as the latest technical inventions, Nazi political economy and sport. A series of pictures is also allotted to medical and hygiene subjects. For films of special National-Socialist educational value, Dr. Goebbels has instituted the Reichs Propaganda Leitung, which produces one to three films a year; their most recent is *I for You and You for Me*, a film detailing the work of German women.

Of the smaller semi-independent companies, Nethus-Films, under the direction of Kurt Hänsel, has made a varied collection of pictures, including an interesting series of bird-life films directed by Professor Walter Hege, and a series of animals, under the direction of Emil Schünemann. Nethus-Film has also a quantity of unedited material, much of which deals with aspects of folk-lore.

From last season's educational productions thirty-seven films were selected by Herr von Rippentrop with an eye to distribution in England. His selection included travel pictures, several excellent scientific films, and a few pictures made with puppets. The standard of these pictures is efficient. One very pleasant film which shows a more personal approach to the subject than most of the new pictures is *Children of the Village*. The choice of child types is good and the direction sensitive. The most noticeable weakness of the present German films of industry and village crafts is the lack of interest shown in the man who does the job. In fact the only documentary in which there is full appreciation of the people on the job is Ruttmann's life-boat film (reviewed in the September issue of *W.F.N.*).

The style of kultur picture highly commended in official quarters is that which sets up the prescribed ideal; for example, the well-made but unnecessarily long *Sport and Soldiers*, which is more interesting to the audience at an army school than the general public; or the picture of the IVth Olympic Sports at Garmisch called *Youth of the World*. This film, with eight other educationals, was sent by Germany to the Venice Exhibition.

Since the advent of National-Socialism, no German company has added anything to the educational and documentary cinema so far as technique and subject matter is concerned. On the other hand, Ufa has created the Institute of Film Economy at Neubabelsberg, which is the first of its kind in the world. The purpose of the museum is to demonstrate, in a lucid manner, the various activities concerned in production, display and marketing of films of all kinds. The exhibition shows the correlation between all studio departments. It is possible to follow every stage from the initial idea of a picture to its final distribution. The exhibition is of immense value, and is the kind of thing which every large studio ought to organise. It has brought to the Ufa studios people of the most diverse professions who have had cause to investigate the methods and possibilities of the cinema.

The most interesting exhibits are the models and apparatus showing how micro-films of bacteria, wild animal films and under-the-sea pictures are made. Such work as double-exposure, back-projection and trick-work with models, is fully explained. In conjunction with the exhibition a series of lectures are held on the art, economy and technical questions.

One noticeable weakness in the Institute is the library, from which are missing a large number of standard works on the cinema. So much written during the best days of the German cinema was the work of those now in exile, or of the Soviet directors, that there are surprising gaps.

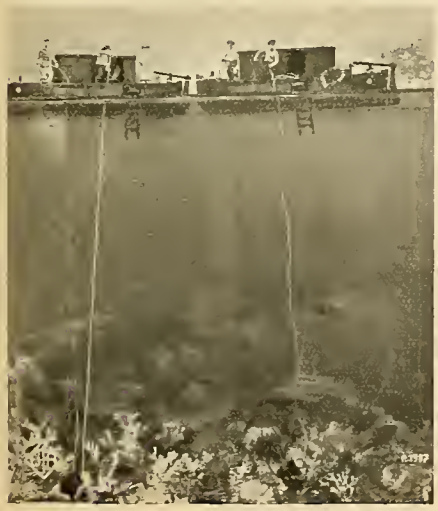
The following statistics of Ufa's total production from 1930 to 1936 appear in the Institute of Economy:

1930–31	566 films.	1931–32	413 films.
1932–33	384 „	1933–34	399 „
1934–35	397 „		

An analysis of the main films for—

	1934–35	1935–36
Feature films	21	26
Ufa production in France	14	16
Shorts	17	30
German kultur films	20	40
Educationals	5	11
International films	19	32

These statistics suggest that the educational picture for non-theatrical distribution in schools and institutions is becoming a prime consideration under the Hitler government. Why?



Filming under water (Ufa model)

London Schools F.S. in Action

"*Since it is essential for teachers to take an active part in the production of educational films— . . .* "

These words, from a motion put forward by Captain Griffith, Chairman of the first Annual Conference, not only summarise the aims and activities in the London Schools Film Society, but indicate that a great deal of controversial ground has already been cleared. The importance of the film acknowledged, and attention turned to the development of available facilities, such a body of opinion will do much to achieve that fusion of differing approaches which can only come from an understanding of the difficulties and limitations of both production and classroom work.

The resolution continues:—

"*. . . this Conference recommends the setting up of a teachers' Production Committee to produce teaching films, to prepare scenarios for teaching films, and to advise on all matters appertaining to the creation of educational films, in collaboration with the British Film Institute.*"

The London Schools Film Society has already done much to organise and encourage interest among teachers and students. Sunday film shows, planned so as to be of special interest to teachers, are contemplated this winter, and it is hoped to form district groups and arrange lectures and demonstrations for those unable to reach London. A Technical Committee and a Committee for the summarising of reports on various film experiments, have been set up, and a fifteen minute film just completed by the Production Unit. This geographical film, made entirely by teachers, deals with the making of cement and its varying uses.

FEDERATION RE-VITALISED

THE FEDERATION IS DEAD—long live the Federation.

The Film Society representatives who responded to the appeal of the (London) Film Society for a reconstituted Federation may congratulate themselves on the speed and efficiency of their deliberations. The Leicester conference produced nothing but a spate of verbiage. Now we have the makings of a workable organisation, thanks to the careful and practical agenda and constructive suggestions of the Film Society, the eagerness of the delegates to get something done, and above all the taut and tactful chairmanship of J. A. Brewin.

The Federation is still, it must be understood, in its infancy. The proposals are only proposals, and have yet to be ratified by the committees of the societies. Moreover, the question of collective booking, which many people consider to be the *raison d'être* of the Federation, has only been discussed very tentatively, and the only decision yet made is a negative one—that finances will not permit the importation of films.

But there is within sight an organisation through which all the film societies in the country can operate, and co-operate. Difficulties with local authorities, booking problems, financial troubles, and the worst of the how's and why's and wherefore's of the hard-worked secretary will become less pressing and less complicated. As the organ of the new Federation, *World Film News* will do all it can to help and encourage the new movement.

The Societies represented at the Conference were:

Billingham: Mrs. Coles (Observer); *Birmingham:* Mrs. R. C. Knight (Hon. Sec.), Hugh Weeks; *British Film Institute:* Oliver Bell (Observer); *Scunthorpe:* Miss M. McKay (Hon. Sec.); *Ipswich:* Gordon Hales (Hon. Sec.), Philip Keene; *Leicester:* H. J. Lane; *Merseyside:* J. Alex Parker; *London:* Miss Elsie Cohen, Miss J. M. Harvey, Ivor Montagu, Basil Wright; *North London:* H. A. Green, Miss O. Withens, Mrs. A. Green, Mrs. L. Green, T. D. Griffin-Beale; *West Essex:* W. Smith; *Manchester and Salford:* J. A. Brewin, T. Cavanagh; *Southampton:* E. S. Fairfax-Jones; *Wolverhampton:* E. L. Packer; *Tyneside:* C. Pottinger, Ernest Dyer; *Manchester:* H. D. Waley (Observer); *Scottish Federation:* J. Stephen Mitchell, Paton Walker (Ayrshire).

Mr. Brewin was elected Chairman of the Conference.

On the proposal of Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Pottinger, the former Federation of Film Societies was liquidated.

CONSTITUTION

The proposed Constitution of the Federation was based on the suggestions circulated by the London Film Society to the members of the old Federation. The resolutions given below are to be communicated to Film Societies throughout the country, who will discuss them and make amendments which will be brought forward at a meeting of an executive committee to take place on December 5th. This committee will then draft the constitution proper.

1. The name of the Federation shall be the British Federation of Film Societies.
2. Membership of the Federation shall be open to any independent Film Society or Federation of Film Societies, provided no society having its activities within a circle of 10 mile radius of another society in senior membership with the Federation shall be accepted as a member directly or indirectly without the approval of such senior society.
3. Membership shall be by election by simple majority of the votes at a General Meeting (save that the Executive shall have power provisionally to accept a society as a member if specifically empowered by a General Meeting to do so), and shall be effective following the payment of a subscription.
4. The subscription shall be £*x* per £100 annual income per year terminating June 30, provided that where a society wishing to become a member may hold that for special reasons its whole income should not be taken into account, the finance committee of the Executive shall have the power to make the necessary modifications.

J. A. BREWIN

5. The organ of government of the Federation shall be the General Meeting, at which every paid-up member society is entitled to be represented by two, every paid-up Federation by four, delegates, who shall be instructed and authorised in respect to the circulated agenda.
6. In addition to the delegates, the members of the Executive, and, at the discretion of the chairman if so requested by a society, additional representatives may be present at general meetings.
7. General meetings shall be held whenever called by the Executive Committee, in any case not less than once annually between May and September, and also within twenty-eight days of the requisition signed by one third of the General Meeting voting strength of the Federation or one third of the number of societies in membership.
8. At General Meetings each paid-up member-society of the Federation shall be entitled to two votes for the first hundred or part of a hundred members, and the votes for each further hundred or part of a hundred members as returned in its most recently audited statement of accounts, filed with the Federation Executive, always provided that if the financial committee shall have allowed a society to pay a subscription on a reckoned less basis of membership, this latter basis shall be used in calculating its voting strength.
9. Proxies may be issued only in writing on specific resolutions.
10. Only the General Meeting shall have power (*a*) to determine policy, (*b*) to modify the constitution, (*c*) to issue instructions and to delegate authority to an Executive, and (*d*) to expel members.
11. All decisions of a General Meeting shall be by simple majority of votes cast, excepting expulsion, which shall be by a majority of not less than two to one.
12. The General Meeting held each year between May and September shall elect an Executive of x persons from any nominations made by societies before the meeting, or by their delegates during the meeting at the discretion of the chairman.

It was agreed that the drafting committee shall work out a scheme of regional representation, based on proportionate prospective membership, plus x persons to be elected by the Federation generally.

13. The first General Meeting held each year subsequent to August 15th shall examine and approve the accounts of the Federation.
14. Not less than fourteen days' notice of any General Meeting shall be forwarded to any member societies and federations.
15. The Executive shall have the duty (*a*) to conduct the affairs of the Federation as instructed by and in accordance with policy as laid down by the General Meetings, (*b*) to appoint a Secretary and Treasurer, (*c*) to circulate before July 31 an audited statement of finance and accounts, (*d*) to circulate together with notice of any General Meeting a notice of the agenda, (*e*) further to delegate activities and duties to duly appointed sub-committees which may include co-opted persons as well as executive members, and (*f*) to meet not less than three times yearly.

It was agreed that the Executive should have power to co-opt members for work on the sub-committee.

16. Any member society of federation may withdraw on giving six months' notice to the Executive, but shall in any case be liable for subscription for the current year.
17. All bookings made by federations and societies members of the Federation shall be made through the machinery of the Federation set up by the Federation for that purpose.

After a long discussion on collective booking and the amount of the subscription, it was decided to appoint the following Interim Executive Committee to make decisions on these and other matters.

INTERIM COMMITTEE

The following were nominated to this Committee: Mr. Parker (Merseyside), Mr. Brewin (Manchester and Salford), Mrs. Knight (Birmingham), Mr. Wright (London), Miss Harvey (London), Mr. Montagu (London), Mr. Lane (Leicester), Mr. Pottinger (Tyneside), Mr. Fairfax-Jones (Southampton), Mr. Griffin-Beale (North London).

At a meeting of this Committee at 5.30 on the same day it was decided that the subscription to the Federation should be £3 per £100 of the gross income of the Society, the minimum subscription being £3. A specially appointed Finance Committee was to deal with special cases.

The question of collective booking was not raised, but the following regional representation scheme was drafted:

Three representatives shall be elected by the General Meeting;

Two representatives shall be elected by Scotland;

One representative shall be elected by each of the following regions, which include the Societies named:

Scottish Federation Plans for the Year

J. S. Fairfax-Jones has been appointed London booking agent for the Scottish Societies, with A. L. Stephen Mitchell, formerly of the Aberdeen Film Society, as liaison officer. Satisfactory bookings for the early part of this season's programmes have been made by most societies and with less inconvenience than has formerly been experienced. A novel feature introduced by the Federation is the issuing of inter-available tickets which enable the members of each society to attend any two performances given by other Scottish film societies.

The Federation has arranged to hold quarterly meetings in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. The Chairman is G. Martin Gray, Aberdeen, and the Secretary is Forsyth Hardy, 54 Bruntsfield Gardens, Edinburgh 10. The Federation now includes Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Ayrshire, Inverness, Dundee and St. Andrews Societies and the new Stirlingshire Society proposes to join. Other centres contemplating the formation of societies are Dumfries, Motherwell and Hamilton.

EAST KENT: The programme held at the Parade Cinema, Margate, on October 25th, included *Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns*, *Housing Problems*, and *The Road to Life*. On November 15th the main picture was *Remous*. The next meeting will be on December 6th, the chief picture being *En Natt*. Intending members should communicate with Miss M. M. Robson, M.A., Hon. Secretary, 133 Northdown Road, Margate.

Federation (contd.)

ENGLAND:

North-West:	Manchester and District
	Merseyside
	Manchester and Salford.
North-East:	Billingham
	Scunthorpe
	Tyneside.
Midlands:	Wolverhampton
	Birmingham
	Leicester
	Oxford
	Ipswich.
West:	Hereford
	Plymouth.
South:	Croydon
	East Kent
	Southampton
	West Essex.
London:	The Film Society
	North London Film Society
	London Film Institute Society.

A questionnaire is being sent to all Film Societies with the minutes of the Conference, with the following questions :—

1. Are you willing to join the Federation?
2. If so, do you agree to the regional representation scheme?
3. Do you agree to make all your bookings through the offices of the Federation?
4. Do you agree to the subscription fee?

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETIES

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY: Arthur Elton, the director of *Housing Problems*, gave a lecture-discussion on *Workers Become Articulate* on November 27th. The following Sunday a programme of films was given at the Monseigneur News Theatre, Strand, when Edgar Anstey introduced an edition of *The March of Time*, specially assembled for the performance. Other films included *Canal Barge*, *Coal*, *Rainbow Dance*, and *Sabra* (Cactus). Applications for membership, guest tickets and remittances should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, 8 King's Road, N.4.

ETON COLLEGE FILM SOCIETY: Founded in October, 1931, holds four meetings a year. The membership is now about 350, and the organisation of the Society is in the hands of six masters and six boys. The nineteenth meeting was held on November 21st. Secretary: W. Williams.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD: The second performance of the season, on November 15th, had a particular interest for all interested in health and psychology, and some notable figures of the medical world were present at the discussion which followed. The films shown were *The Dragon of Wales*, *Nutrition*, *Feeding Time at the Zoo*, *On Parade*, and *The Eternal Mask*. The third performance will be on December 6th, when the principal film will be *Marchand D'Amour*. Secretary: Douglas A. Donald, 16 Great King Street, Edinburgh, 5.

THE CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY gave four showings last month of films at the Millicent Fawcett Hall, Westminster.

Two of the films were demonstrations of Catholic ceremonies, Baptism and Holy Mass. These tended to give the ceremonies in too great detail to be of general interest. The film about the Oberammergau Passion Play, its history and its players, was marred by defects in continuity.

An interesting film, made by the Franciscan Sisters of Guildford, described the general routine of their life, the ceremonies enacted for a novice and the work done in their hospital, including some very realistic close-ups of teeth extraction and an operation.

A film made by F. B. Newton on the Monks of Mount Melleray, Ireland, showed the rough ground they had turned into farm-land, pasture and gardens, the preparation of a feast for the Abbot's neighbours and evening prayer and meditation.

Aran of the Saints will be shown at the forthcoming show in the Lewisham Town Hall, Catford, on November 24th.

The next monthly display at Millicent Fawcett Hall is at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, December 2nd, when Rev. Ferdinand Valentine, O.P., will lecture on Liturgical Films.

Tickets for both the above shows may be had from the Honorary Secretary, Catholic Film Society, 36 Gt. Smith Street, S.W.1.

SOUTHAMPTON: The sixth season opened on November 8th at the Picture House, Southampton, with a programme consisting of *Bonne Chance*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, *Workers and Jobs*, and *Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns*. Subsequent films will be selected from *Marchand D'Amour*, *The Student of Prague*, *Merlusse*, *Die Ewige Maske*, *Musik im Blut* and others. Honorary Secretary and Treasurer: J. S. Fairfax-Jones, 10 Golden Square, W.1.

OXFORD: The society held two meetings in November at the Scala Cinema, films shown including *Night Mail*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, *Le Group Garou*, *Bonne Chance*, *Son of Ceylan*, *Rainbow Dance* and *Fox Hunt*. In the next programme on December 13th are *Blackmail*, *Weather Forecast*, and *What the News Reel Shows*. Secretary and Treasurer: E. F. Bowtell, 105 Victoria Road, Oxford.

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL UNION CLUB: On Saturday morning, December 12th, at 10.30 a.m. Basil Wright will lecture at Bristol News Theatre on "The Cinema and Society," His film *The Song of Ceylon*, will be shown. This lecture forms part of the programme of the local branch of the Royal Empire Society, but the general public will be admitted at a small charge.

WOLVERHAMPTON: The society now has a membership of 245, and is in its second season. Its aim is to stir up interest in "the further reaches of the cinema," but is finding the Watch Committee a difficult opponent. Non-members are admitted to the meetings. Programme secretary: E. L. Packer, Himley Crescent, Wolverhampton.

TYNESIDE: The Tyneside Film Society showed *The Great Train Robbery*, *En Natt*, and *Diet and Nutrition* on November 1st. The discussion in the Club Room following the programme was well attended. Dr. J. C. Spence, whose enquiries into malnutrition in Newcastle have been widely quoted (*e.g.*, the chapter in "Poverty and Public Health") and Dr. Charles, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Newcastle, were amongst the members who spoke about the Nutrition film.

The general opinion of the Nutrition film was that it was more likely to succeed in disturbing the social conscience of the well-fed classes than in giving practical instruction to the ill-fed poor. Dr. Charles quoted instances and statistics from a forthcoming report on nutrition in Newcastle showing the meagre consumption of milk, alike amongst unemployed families and employed.

The discussion on *En Natt* was opened by Baron Lagerfelt of the Swedish Consulate, who explained the politico-geographical background of the story.

OTHER film society showings include *Warning Shadows* and *Now and Then* (Brighton, Hove and District Film Institute Society); *Die Ewige Maske* (Leicester Film Society), and *Der Hauptmann van Kaepenick* (Manchester and Salford Workers Film Society).

Newsreel Rushes by the Commentator

"THE GUY FAWKES DEAL" they're calling it now: it shot into the news like a rocket: then just petered out in a puff of smoke. Final result of days of excited rumour and counter-rumour is that John Maxwell does not for the time being get control of Gaumont British, and in the Newsreel world everything is as it was before.

TITLES ARE MAKING REEL NEWS—due to recent changes by three out of the five companies. General make-up of the reels remains as for years past; two to five "title stories," 70 to 150 ft. long, with 10 ft. "newspaper headlines" titles—and a central section of "flash stories," 25 to 70 ft. long, grouped under a general title, *i.e.*, "Our Roving Cameraman Reports," "News in a Nutshell," etc. It is the details of the titles themselves that have been changed during recent weeks. The position up to a few weeks ago:—

TITLE STORIES. Gaumont British and Universal used special backgrounds for their titles—G.B.'s revolving world was by far the best, supplied movement, an easily identified trade mark. Universal's "pretty design" was more muddled, many found it a hindrance to reading. Additional Universal disadvantage was that the title was in two parts, with a wipe in between; slow, cumbersome. Pathé used plain black backgrounds. The big disadvantage of all these was that none provided any continuity between title and picture. Title music came to a crashing end, title flashed off, picture flashed on. Paramount's titles were worst of all, they were whole paragraphs, often requiring as much as twenty feet, and making the reel painfully slow. Movietone used all titles superimposed over the first picture of the story, providing much better continuity, but against light background, wording is often extremely illegible.

FLASH STORIES. G.B., Universal and Pathé used a flash title between each story indicating the place where the pictures were taken. But the location of the stories does not give any indication of their type, or provide any link with previous or following stories, the greatest need of the modern, "hotch potch" reel. Movietone used, and still use the only sensible method; grouping "flashes" under general heads, *i.e.*, Sport, World Affairs, Fashions. Paramount were bottom again with "flash" titles as long as the others' main titles.

RECENT CHANGES. G.B.'s moving world, and flash titles spelling themselves across the screen became rightly famous. Suddenly, without warning, they dropped all that. For a few bad days they used an idea first introduced in their "Review of 1935"—a background of pictures of their cameramen, turning handles, squinting into viewfinders—there was so much detail, movement, that few people managed to read the titles. Like a hot cinder, this idea was dropped. There appeared two G.B. issues without any titles whatsoever, main or flash. The strain of trying to follow where one story finished and the next began was too much. The following week, there came a revised version, back to the revolving world behind main titles, the pictures of the cameramen behind the "Our Roving Cameraman Reports," and the flashes run into each other, without any title. Paramount provided the next sensation. The "paragraph" main titles were thrown overboard, and in their place "newspaper headlines." The flash titles were drowned too, and replaced by location titles superimposed on the pictures without breaking their continuity. But as with all new toys, Paramount are now overdoing the superimposing: well-known personalities who are immediately recognised anyway, have their names superimposed across their chests, as well as being called out by the commentator. Universal too have introduced a moving black strip with a location title, to separate their flashes. Pathé stick where they were, with all titles separate from the pictures, all helping to make the reel jerky. Movietone remain all-superimposed, often badly illegible.

> Local newsreels are the latest feature in the Midlands. The Tatler Theatre at Liverpool has started a weekly newsreel service covering events of local interest. 16mm. sound on film is used, and the film is projected from the ordinary projection box on to the ordinary screen. To ensure good lighting, arcs are used in the 16mm. projector.

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION? As usual it seems to be a combination of all current ideas. First, as a trade mark, each newsreel should choose a distinctive title background—preferably as simple and clear as G.B.'s, revolving world. Second, this background should stay on the screen behind the title for about 7 ft. Third, the title should remain, while the background fades into the first picture of the story. Fourth, at about 10 ft. the title should fade out, leaving the picture. Fifth, title music, with a definite finish on the title should be abolished, replaced by a gradual fade into the music or sound of the picture. Sixth, flash stories should be titled in groups, as by Movietone, leaving the commentator to indicate location, link individual stories. Again the title should start against a background, finish against the picture. Thus would be achieved complete legibility, complete continuity.

THEN THE NEWSREELS should turn their attention to the wording of their main titles. At present these are based entirely on newspaper headlines, but the conditions as between page and screen are quite different. A reader of *The Times*, opening his paper, is faced by 14 columns. Each has a headline designed to attract his attention to that particular point, each headline must tell him at a glance whether the subject is likely to interest him: final choice is his. Newsreel looker has no such choice. He must sit through the story or shut his eyes and ears; therefore all the newsreel title need do is to arouse interest. Present day long explanatory titles generally achieve the opposite effect. To say *Omaha Wins Kentucky Derby by 3 lengths*, followed by shots before the start of the race, hardly helps the commentator when he tries to work up the atmosphere of excitement over the race not yet run, to present the start as if first one horse is a likely winner, then another, and finally Omaha's magnificent spurt carries the day. The art of creating titles with a special "interest arousing" quality has been perhaps brought to the greatest perfection by the American magazine *Time*. Recent examples: *Hand Picked Bones* on story about art exhibition of works by artist Muirhead Bone; *Nobody's Satellite* on story of Belgium breaking away from European entanglements; *Again, Shopping Days*, on a story of the end of the Arab strike in Palestine. British newsreels, please copy!

* * *

An incredible blunder was made by all the newsreels in their issues dated November 9th; apparently suffering from a surfeit of "intelligent anticipation" they announced the fall of Madrid and some even included shots purporting to show the entry of Franco's troops into the City.

The newsreels had entirely miscalculated the capacity of the Government forces to defend the Capital. This is not the first time that their information about Spain has been inaccurate and ill-informed. Maybe it will teach them a lesson.

Newsreel Rushes—(contd.)

ARMISTICE DAY BROUGHT the first big annual special of the newsreel winter season, brought out too interesting comparisons in the way each dealt with the 18 year old ceremony. By previous agreement between the reels, only London callers, those which are close enough to send their own boys to collect the films, were given specials the same evening. Newsreel chiefs call that "working hand in hand." Provincial exhibitors, failing to get their specials, use stronger language.

Notes, after seeing all five reels:—

Movietone: out in the West End at 5.0 p.m. An outstanding attempt to treat the old story in a new way. The 1936 ceremony played only a small part in the film—there must have been only about six shots or less of this year's service at the Cenotaph. The rest, a smooth flowing essay in pacifist propaganda, on the lines of "we remember our dead and talk about peace, but look how we're all re-arming." Movietone beat all the others for speed. Score: 3 points for production, 1 point for speed of issue.

Pathé: out in West End at 5.30 p.m. The same old story treated in the same old way; nothing new, nothing different. But for the new King, it might have been last year's. Silence covered by superimposed war stock shots over Cenotaph. Noticeable that Whitehall had suddenly emptied completely of crowds. Over this, Cedric Belfrage spoke lines of poetry. Excellent commentary by Roy de Groot. He has the voice and the manner for this sort of thing. Score: 2 points for commentary.

Universal: out in West End at 7.30 p.m. This is where Universal's lack of any sound equipment lets them down badly. The King comes out to the accompaniment of what sounds like a cathedral organ—"O God our Help" sung by thousands, sounds like village choir—but biggest laugh, when from sound track comes single BUGLE playing "Last Post" while picture shows whole line of R.A.F. TRUMPETERS. Silence covered by Jeffrey reciting Binyon's "For the Fallen." He should know better than to say "ajhe—sshhall not weary them." Score: nil.

Gaumont British: out in West End at 7.40 p.m. Pictorially perhaps the best of the five. War shots superimposed over a lamp of remembrance; a fine war graves sequence, followed by rapid dissolves through war memorials; the best edited version of the 1936 ceremony itself. Brilliant sound cutting—part library music—part music of the 1936 ceremony. The only reel that had the telling effect of dead silence, while the King laid his wreath, and again during THE silence. Not so smooth flowing as *Movietone's*. Commentary by Emmott well written, but his voice is far from suitable, always that slight upward inflection that makes us expect a joke. Score: 3 points for pictures, 2 points for sound.

Paramount: out in West End at 8.10 p.m. Ceremony editing moderate. Surprising difference between effect of G.B.'s picture of the King Laying Wreath silent, and here with added funeral march. The Silence not mentioned at all! "War-like World" idea introduced with close ups of Hitler and Mussolini—a slightly unpleasant taste. Score: nil.

FINAL PLACING:

Gaumont British	5
Movietone	4
Pathé	2
Paramount	nil
Universal	nil

GEORGE POCKNALL

(No. 4 of Cameramen Series)

GEORGE POCKNALL has been associated with cameras all his life. He started off as apprentice camera-maker to the old Midland Camera Co. of Birmingham, and later took a turn at still photography. On his first venture into films in 1912 he started Baer & Co., of Denmark Street, with a printing plant that consisted of an old Darling camera, a biscuit box, a condenser and lamp. The drying drum was made of broomsticks.

Hollywood apparently called in those early days because Pocknall left for America. But he got no further than Canada, where before long he found himself in dungarees putting stained glass windows in a church. This enabled him to raise the cash to get back to England, where he took up camera work seriously, studying under Charles Gazier, a pupil of Charles Pathé, and working at an open-air stage at Alexandra Palace. He later spent five months in Rome shooting for the World's Feature-Film Corporation of Chicago and afterwards took the job of assistant manager of the American Company of Wardour Street's film factory at Croydon.

After the war a variety of jobs included work at British Instructional Films, Famous Players, Lasky, Newman and Sinclair and British National Pictures at Elstree. Following a short period with British Talking Pictures he rejoined British Instructional Films and remained working under Bruce Woolfe, with whom he went over when Gaumont-British Instructional was formed in 1932.

He has turned on many documentaries with Paul Rotha, Donald Carter and Mary Field. His lovely exterior photography was one of the features of the "Face of Britain" series of films, and he has recently completed a difficult job of filming champion swimmers under water. There is nothing he does not know of filters and camera-mechanics.

With so variegated a career to his credit George Pocknall has worked under most of the well-known British and some American producers. Among them, Syd Chaplin, Herbert Wilcox, Monty Banks, E. A. Dupont, and Walter Summers.

Short, alert, and with bright blue eyes, Pocknall preserves among his memoirs the incident when an English director suggested he should use smoke effects when shooting a boudoir scene. On asking the reason it appeared that the director had much admired the effect of a previous scene when the set was a fish and chip shop. Pocknall failed to see the connection.

Colour Films Need Real Artists

says Fernand Leger

Fernand Leger, the famous painter, shows great interest in colour films. "The colour films I have seen," he said, "all lack the same thing. They need real artists to help make them—we should not turn them into 'avant-garde' films as they seem to fear."

There is no art in colour films at present, Mr. Leger thinks. He points out that he never "colours" his own pictures; he leaves a neutral background, or paints everything with the exception of a human figure, giving it only contours. Clouet and Cranach did the same with their figures or faces, so that by the law of complementary colours the forms reflected the colours of their surroundings and appeared full of life. Colour films should work on a similar principle. The directors believe that to make the best of the film they must add as much colour as possible, whereas actually they should be taking colour away. A coloured object must be put against a neutral background, for colour added to colour gives the effect of a cheap picture postcard. The right shade of neutral grey will have to be found before colour films can progress.

Every subject must receive a different treatment, for the colour must be used as a means of expression; must correspond with the action of the film. A film such as Allegret's *Lac Aux Dames*, for instance, should stress its point by very light, transparent sbades and delicate greys. Pierre Chenal's *Crime et Châtiment* would require dark, violent colours and contrasts.

Leger is no stranger to the cinema. His *Ballet Mécanique* was, in its time, an original and unusual work. He then worked with Alberto Cavalcanti, and decorated Marcel L'Herbier's *L'Inhumaine*. A year ago he made sketches and notes for Wells's film, *Things to Come*. He found it interesting working for Korda, but he found it difficult to agree with Wells over the costume design, and thus there is little of Leger's work to be seen in the Wells film.

Last year Leger began a marionette film with André Vigneau. But the film was left unfinished as he had to attend an exhibition of his pictures in New York. There he developed the idea of a Charlie Chaplin film, in which everything Charlie touched was transformed into cubes. Chaplin, however, refused to allow his figure to be used for this.

But Leger still dreams of a full-length Chaplin film in colour, with Charlie's figure alone in black and white.

L. E.

Film Finance Changes

SINCE the publication of the Film Council analysis of American film finance in *W.F.N.* last month an interesting change has occurred in the ownership of Loew's Inc. (M.G.M.) capital. It is reported that the Thalberg block of about 30,000 shares, valued at approximately £420,000 has been acquired by a British financial group, said to be unconnected with the film industry. While it is strongly denied that this transfer has any connection with the Fox-Loew-Gaumont or A.B.P.C. Gaumont deals, it has nevertheless an important bearing on the problem of Anglo-American film relations which will be fully discussed in the Film Council study of the British film industry we hope to publish in our next issue.

Filming a Factory

By ANDREW BUCHANAN

This is the third of the series of ten articles by Andrew Buchanan specially prepared for W.F.N. as a tuition course for amateurs

AMATEURS AND PROFESSIONALS are invariably fascinated by the sight of gleaming machinery on the screen, and industrial processes of almost every kind offer excellent opportunities to the film-maker. Nevertheless, there are more difficulties in this type of subject than in any other, and they can only be removed by approaching it in the right way, on a leisurely and systematic basis. Now, the first point to realise is that in practically every industry which is to be filmed, something must be left out, or the production would never end. Accordingly, the factory must be carefully studied with this end in view. Secondly, the Director must be conscious of the fundamental fact that although the various machines in a factory are working independently, they are, collectively contributing to a common end, which is to keep up a steady output of pots, pans, cigarettes, electric globes, or jam-jars. One plant feeds another, and consequently they are all working simultaneously. Therefore, he has to establish this fact on the screen, and make it so vividly apparent that the audience, which is entirely ignorant of the factor's many processes, shall realise that everything is going on simultaneously.

Now, to plan the basis for his film, the Director must approach the factory—any factory—with a cinematic eye, and he will quickly find that the Works Manager does not possess such an asset, for that worthy gentleman will try to induce the Director to film *everything*, including the playing-fields, the girls' rest-room, and, of course, himself, posing heavily against the boilers. That is all very well if the result is to be a three-hour film designed to please the factory staff at its Christmas Party, but the real job in hand when filming industry is to create a film that shall contain only essentials, and which shall hold the attention of a disinterested group of people.

The easy-going attitude of filming everything is by far the deepest pitfall into which the unimaginative, and/or inexperienced Director will sink, for all he has to do is to enter a factory, set up his camera in front of each machine, turn a few feet, and go to the next one, until every plant has been shot in vague semi-long shots, which are just near enough to permit the audience to see that the machinery is doing something interesting, and just far enough away to prevent it seeing exactly what it is doing. These shots are invariably embellished by the pale faces of very curious workers, popping in and out of the background, and staring directly into the camera. Such treatment misses nothing that is visible, and yet it captures none of the essential character of the process, or the place.

How then should one go about so complicated a business? Firstly by simplifying it, and this is best done by the Director visiting the factory—we'll assume it makes cigarettes—and, at leisure, studying everything that is going on, making one list of all the processes which he intends to shoot, and another of those processes which, though vital to the cigarette manufacturer, are not filmable. This will naturally create the first battle with the Works Manager, who will be quite unable to appreciate the fact that a process which is taking place inside a large black iron tank is useless to the Director, for nothing is visible. In this way one learns to differentiate between good and poor screen material, and in so doing, one may reject vital though motionless processes, and, in their places, may select comparatively unimportant though extremely filmable incidents, which the Works Manager has probably never noticed during the inevitable thirty years he has worked there.

Yet little incidents, such as the worn leather sleeve of a girl, forever moving to and fro, the impressive lever which controls certain power, the shadow of a machine criss-crossing over a man's features, nimble fingers stacking cartons in symmetrical piles—these, and a hundred similar details, must not escape the eye of the Director during his preliminary survey. After that, he goes home and draws up a list of shots, which will, collectively, portray a complete pictorial explanation of the process in question. Those machines which reveal none of their magic to the eye are listed separately, and the processes they are engaged upon must be accounted for finally either by titles, or in the commentary. The Director's notes must be so comprehensive that they enable him to remember where each machine is located, for he will shoot them according to their position in the factory, which does not necessarily mean in chronological order.

LIGHTING

The question of lighting is best left for the Director to solve according to his private facilities, but I would warn him not to attempt to illuminate the entire premises in vast long-shots, hoping to show a hundred workers at a time. My industrial films are confined to the actual mechanical processes, and I rarely, if ever, include scenes which reveal either the size of the premises, or the number of people employed. Three or four spot lights are usually adequate, and if carefully arranged round a machine, give perfect results. Occasionally one encounters mammoth industries, such as paper-making, which, as you may know, includes a colossal machine closely resembling four Royal Scot locomotives strung together, and unless one is prepared to introduce banks of overhead lighting, countless ground lights, and lots of other costly paraphernalia, one had better leave paper-making machinery alone, and concentrate on making paper-flowers in the drawing room.

Now let us assume that with notes in hand, and lights ready, the Director starts production. What is it about? Making cigarettes by machinery. Very well, I suggest a brief prologue to enable titles or commentary to state the magnitude of the industry, and the popularity of smoking. This will create the right atmosphere—a rather smoky one. Therefore, he should shoot about ten or more contrasting close-ups of cigarettes in lips, emerging from cases, being crushed in ash-trays, being lit one from another, being gracefully smoked, and disgracefully sucked. Cigarettes! That is the subject. Make the audience conscious of the fact that they are about to become familiar with the little known machinery which is forever pounding out packets of cigarettes. Then the prologue merges into cigarettes in an unrecognisable form—vast bales of tobacco leaves as they are received from abroad. Groups of workers are breaking these up into piles of brown dried leaves, which justify two or three close-ups, as fingers examine them, for they form the basis of cigarettes. As we look at the leaves many more drop on to them, and they are whisked away. Good bold near shots enable the audience to see exactly what is going on, and why, and although there may be several repetitive processes in this sorting and sifting department, one is sufficient. Then the camera shoots a close-up of an enormous blade which is chopping up the leaves and thrusting them down a conveyor, which carries them into hoppers that sift and cleanse them, and after passing through a fine mesh, the tobacco arrives at the machine which feeds all the subsequent mechanism engaged in making the actual cigarettes. These fall in hundreds into containers which, in magical fashion, divide them into tens, and force them into packets. That, briefly, is the story, but the task of the Director is to plant the fact on the audience that one machine cannot work unless all the others are doing their bit, and that all the mechanism is relying upon the constant work of the first group of workers who are splitting up the bales of tobacco, and sorting the leaves. Therefore, each machine should be shot for a sufficiently long duration to enable the strips to be cut into several equal parts.

Intercutting then enables the Director to create the essential simultaneous effect, for after he has shown machines One, Two and Three, he should cut in One again before introducing number Four, and, after Six he should show both One and Three, and so on, and he might well end up by showing the *last* and the *first* processes alternately, to establish the fact that the finished cigarettes are the outcome of the efforts of the first feeding machine.

Now, the film possesses the power to dramatise an industrial process by the magnification of the close-up, thereby giving prominence to incidents which, to the human eye, appear comparatively insignificant. Consequently, the Director must actually recreate an industry, so that it shall give considerable emphasis to certain processes, and, to some extent, glorify the mechanism. Thus, he makes a condensed yet comprehensive version of machinery which, though instantly recognisable by the factory workers themselves, will surprise them by its impressive rhythmic movements and size.

Lastly, whatever the industry may be, the Director should never overlook the human element, and the fact that the most complicated mechanism in the world is the creation of Man, and remains under his control. The watching eyes of the man in the power house, the hand on the control lever, the sensitive nose and palate of the man who is testing the quality of the finished cigarettes, and the mechanic who rushes forward to remedy a slight defect in one of the machines—these are incidents which must be introduced, for however awe-inspiring machinery may be as it

[*Contd. on next page.*]

Pop Burnford— King of the Amateurs

THE INTERNATIONAL TROPHY of the Institute of Amateur Cinematography has been won this year by H. A. (Pop) Burnford, a comparative newcomer to the field. Last year with his film *Cement* he won the I.A.C.'s award for the best documentary and the Savile Cup in the Scottish international competition. He is to be distinguished from the veteran amateur who won the Venice gold medal last year whose name is also Burnford, but who happens to be H. A.'s son.

The prize-winning film this year is *Harvests of the Forests*. Mr. Burnford has now disposed of his 16mm. equipment and if he touches films again it will be on a larger scale.

Pop Burnford is 60 years old, is a civil engineer, and is still controlling construction works in the suburbs of London. He is also an expert card manipulator, and a violinist and can turn his hand to most things for, as he says, he is first of all a workman. He is also something of an artist, for his films, though straight and simple jobs of explanation have the finer touches of photography, composition and cutting that place them above the general run of amateur, and for that matter, professional work in the shorts field.

Here is a brief outline of his career:

Apprenticed as a lad to the building trade, studied civil engineering, joined Hengler's Circus in Dublin as a violinist at 25 shillings a week; travelled to South Africa with a violin, a box of mathematical instruments and kit of carpenter's tools; met on the boat a strange character who had been a policeman, prize-fighter, riveter and card sharper, and who taught him how to handle a pack of cards; got a job in the building trade in South Africa where he built offices, roads, railways and also fiddled a bit for his living; fell off a roof and damaged one of his hands so that prospects of a musical career were out of the question (though he is a first-rate violinist even now); continued with civil engineering in South Africa and later in England.

His film career has only begun for old man Burnford does a job properly and hopes to tackle a sound film before long. He is steadily following in the footsteps of his son who has in the meantime become professional.

There is every chance of Mr. Burnford senior making good. He has in the first place a good sense of humour. He does not take films too seriously and he finds that works of constructing and business management are also important. He is also aware that such a thing as politics exist and is a bit of a philosopher. In fact he has a good many interests, has studied many subjects and is very sane. His films profit from varied experience and a well-balanced mind as much as they do from camera aptitude and a sense of composition and rhythm. With all the subjects in the world to choose from he has chosen subjects that he knew and that he regarded as important. He has shot them, knowing and having worked on the jobs his camera has recorded. He has not been misled, as so many amateurs unfortunately are, by wild enthusiasm for a new medium of expression and by ambition over-riding experience. His films are not ambitious but they are gems of careful craftsmanship.

The winning film *Harvests of the Forest* competed this year with a collection of films of much higher standard than any yet submitted to I.A.C. competitions.

T. Lawrensen, with his charming film *Another Happy Day*, won the *Daily Mail* International Trophy. Mr. Lawrensen was also winner of the Lizars Cup for the best Scottish film.

The final adjudicators were: Alexander Korda, George Perinal, Bernard Knowles, Victor Saville, Alfred Hitchcock, W. E. Chadwick, George Grossmith, Seton Margrave, Gordon S. Malthouse and Norman Jenkins.

Prizewinners, other than those mentioned, were: E. E. Pritchard, bronze medal for *Below the Horizon;* J. H. Lorimer, bronze medal for *Creels;* Khoji Tukamoto, Home Movies cup for *Mystery in the Forest*, and Amateur Cine World plaque for *Mount Zao;* Dr. R. A. Stewart, silver medal for *Story of the Bee;* A. S. Phillips, bronze medal for *Bird Life on the Farne Islands;* H. J. Ganderson, bronze medal for *Men of the Land;* F. Meissner, bronze medal for *Neptunia;* C. W. M. Young, Amateur Cine World plaque for *Conspiracy;* the Stoke-on-Trent Cine Society, London Films Gold Challenge Trophy for *The V-Ray Tube.*

Filming a Factory—(contd.)

glides to and fro over the screen, it is utterly dependent upon the men behind the scenes, and the loosening of one tiny screw can transform a mechanical masterpiece from a towering dominating giant into a pathetic inanimate cluster of useless wheels.

It is the essential spirit of industry which the camera must capture—a spirit that pervades all industries, and is entirely dependent upon the perfect system that rules both men and machines. That is why Industry is a good thing for the amateur to concentrate upon, for if he can train his mind to work as smoothly and as efficiently as the system governing a great factory, he will be on the right road, providing, of course, he does not allow his mind to become mechanised.

CATALOGUE OF AMATEUR FILMS

A valuable service has been done to the programme secretaries of all amateur groups by the Salford Ciné Society. Their Secretary, Mr. K. W. Kenyon, has compiled a list of all ciné societies, with particulars of their completed films, and conditions of loan. The catalogue was issued in August, and is to be kept up-to-date by the publication of a November supplement.

THE METEOR FILM PRODUCING SOCIETY, GLASGOW, in its fourth annual report shows a considerable increase in membership and a small credit balance on the year's working. Meetings are held in the studio (234 Sauchiehall Street) every Tuesday evening, and non-members are invited to pay a visit between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. The current production is a fantasy based on a game of cards, entitled *Fourth in Hand.* Secretary: Miss Peggy L. Clark, 15 North Gardner Street, Glasgow, W.1.

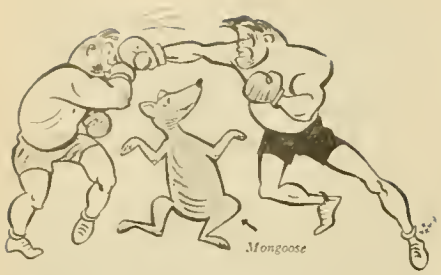
WIMBLEDON CINE CLUB has begun its winter session of weekly meetings. *Unknown Motive* is nearing completion, and preliminary preparations are being made for the next production. A visit is expected from Paul Rotha sometime during the month. Hon. Secretary: C. W. Watkins, 79 Mostyn Road, Merton Park, S.W.19. Annual subscription, 30*s*.

ELTHAM CINE SOCIETY was formed in March, 1935, and the membership consists of about thirty. Jack Hulbert is the president. The Society is primarily a producing unit, and were the first amateurs in England to use the Kodachrome colour system. Hon. Secretary: F. Rainbow, 7 Spearman Street, Woolwich, S.E.18.

DARTINGTON HALL FILM UNIT has been in existence for a year, and produced six educational films, including a detailed regional survey of North West Derbyshire, in four parts — geography, communications, industry, and farming. Plans for the future include a film on cotton, another on the development of a river system, and one on intensive farming. Film officer: William Hunter, The School, Dartington Hall, Totnes.

AMATEUR CINE SOCIETY, BOURNEMOUTH, was founded in August, 1935, and has made one film. The membership is at present twelve, and its activities include all branches of production and projection. Hon. Secretary: Frank Wellstead, 1174 Christchurch Road, Boscombe East, Bournemouth.

"Harvests of the Forest"



"From the mouse came forth a mountain."

Will someone please orda
Mr. Korda.
To take off his spectacles (see what I mean?)
And put some down-to-earth pictures on the screen;
Even if it means Mr. Laughton
Having to shaughton
His hair,
I wouldn't care.

DON'T MAKE MY SONNY A STAR, SIR

or, Mother Knows Best, When She's Sober

A grey-haired old woman, all wrinkled with care,
Once stood in a film office grand,
A-looking with pride at the boy by her side,
Holding tight to her horny old hand.
Before her the Film Magnate lolled at his ease,
An 'orrible leer in his eye,
But bravely the woman sank on to her knees
And unto the Magnate did cry:
"Don't make my sonny a star, sir,
Don't put my boy on the screen.
My little Freddie
'E's not very steady.
Susceptible, see what I mean?
I don't want him pawed by that Garbo,
Nor no other sex-appeal queen;
His dad was too fond
Of a nice bit of blonde,
So don't put my boy on the screen!"
The magnate, he picked up a gold-plated phone,
And ordered two bottles of stout.
Then he patted the head of the stripling and said,
"I gotta get this figured out."
With a hand like an underdone sirloin of beef,
He lit a Corona cigar;
Then loosening his boots with a sigh of relief,
He said, "Now you listen 'ere Ma:
I *will* make your sonny a film star,
I *will* give your boy glamour rôles;
We'll take out them pimples
And give him some dimples
And christen him little Boy Boles.
I'll 'ave him play opposite Dietrich,
'E ought to be safe at thirteen;
If he starts asking questions
I'll put him in Westerns,
But I *will* put your boy on the screen (yes, ma'am!),
I will put your boy on the screen!"

RODNEY HOBSON

TOOTS PARAMOUR SINKING FAST

Boys and Girls. . . . From her sickbed, maybe from her deathbed, your Toots pens these poignant lines . . . while before her eyes dance the happy memories of a life spent as willing thrall to filmdom. . . . Early-morning caviare with Maisie MacMudd in a back-passage at the Bullseye Studios. . . . Free champagne at Superblistertone first-nights. . . . And dawn over Surbiton during night exteriors with Juju Strumpf on *The Girl With the Tin-Opener*.

* * *

Alackaday, I fear it's all over. . . . A mortal chill has struck me, and the Great Continuity Girl is turning the last pages of my Script . . . and all because I forgot my fur coat when I went down to Southend for the Arabian sequences of Scramfilms' *Sheik, and Let's Be Friends*. . . . Ten days in the freezing mud with nothing to do except watch dummy pyramids swept away by the tide and carried out to the end of the pier. . . . While the star, svelte and slinky Gretchen Rammrod, sat in her crepe de chine tent complaining and complaining and complaining. . .

* * *

As soon as I got home I knew I was sickening. . . . For, believe it or not, I went to a Shirley Temple film and didn't enjoy it . . . and sure enough a few hours later my arches fell with a crash, and when I caught myself smiling in a friendly way at Begonia de Blurb, ace fan-writer for that miserable rag *Seen and Heard* . . . I knew the end had come. . . .

* * *

The doctor has just been . . . he stayed a long time . . . and now I'm afraid it's all over. . . .

STOP PRESS.

We regret to announce the death of Miss Toots Paramour at the early age of fifty-three. A well-known figure in the shadier sidewalks of Wardour Street, Miss Paramour will be regretted by all the throwers-out of the big studios. "She were a tough nut," said one of them to-day; "and there weren't many of us who could get her head first into the gutter at first throw."

The funeral will take place quietly at the Battersea Home for Cats, and according to her last wishes Miss Paramour will be buried wrapped in Reel Three of *Anxious Angels*. A simple tombstone will be raised (by subscription) bearing the inscription *Per Ardua ad Arliss*.

Thus ends another chapter in the progress of film art.

SNOOKS GREISER, *W.F.N.'s* satanic lift boy, encountered a Miss Mary Field in his lift the other day.

Snooks: "I see from the papers that you say you like living dangerously, huh? So I expect you'd like me to show you a few tricks with the lift, huh?

* * * * !!!! * * * * !!!!
* * * * !!!! * * * * !!!!

Third Floor—Ambulances, Medicine Chests, Bath Chairs, Invalid Carriages, and *World Film News*."

Dramatic Fragment

Directar. Thrice have the cameras whirred their weary way,
Thrice have the actors played their part, and thrice
The negative no imprint hath received
Because the lights have fused.
Cameraman. My noble lord
Be not impatient. Ere the crescent moon
Rises sublime above the studio roof
This scene shall be recorded. Hither, knave!
Thou electrician! What's to do?
Electrician. Alack!
I do behold the Queen of Night, arrayed
In splendid blackness.
Director. Wherefore didst thou fuse
The suns, the arcs, the incandescents?
1st Assistant. Sir,
Methinks he is enamoured of the night.
2nd Assistant. What ho! without there! Lights!
Cameraman. I shall go mad.
Actor. Alack! My make-up is entirely spoilt,
My voice is gone, I totter on my feet
With weariness disjointed.
Actress. As for me
I am, My Lord, intolerant by nature.
And here by Dietrich's holy name I swear,
If within fifteen minutes by the clock
Ye do not turn this scene and, having turned,
Pronounce it perfect, I forthwith will tear,
Dismember and entirely conflagrate
My contract.
Actor. So will I.
Director. I beg of you
If you have ever felt the pangs of birth. . . . etc.

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"Nuts, Crack Them and Eat Them."
Gef, the Talking Mongoose

"I must have a panther. I am a very brave woman. I want this beautiful animal to go with me when I am shopping."—*Simone Simon.*

"Sure, you're Garbo, but you read, don't you?"—*A Los Angeles newsboy.*

"He's getting too big to be kissing Wallace Beery."—*Fan letter about Jackie Cooper.*

LORUM

My Secretary's so dumb she thinks that

Junior Carlton is a boy film star.

The Dog-Star is called Pluto. And she's quite Sirius about it.

Capra comes from coco-nuts.

Arliss is a girl's name.

Vitaphone is what you get in food—Vitaphone A, B and C.

Rhodes of Africa was a motoring film.

United Artists are Siamese twins who paint.

William Powell started the Boy Scout movement.

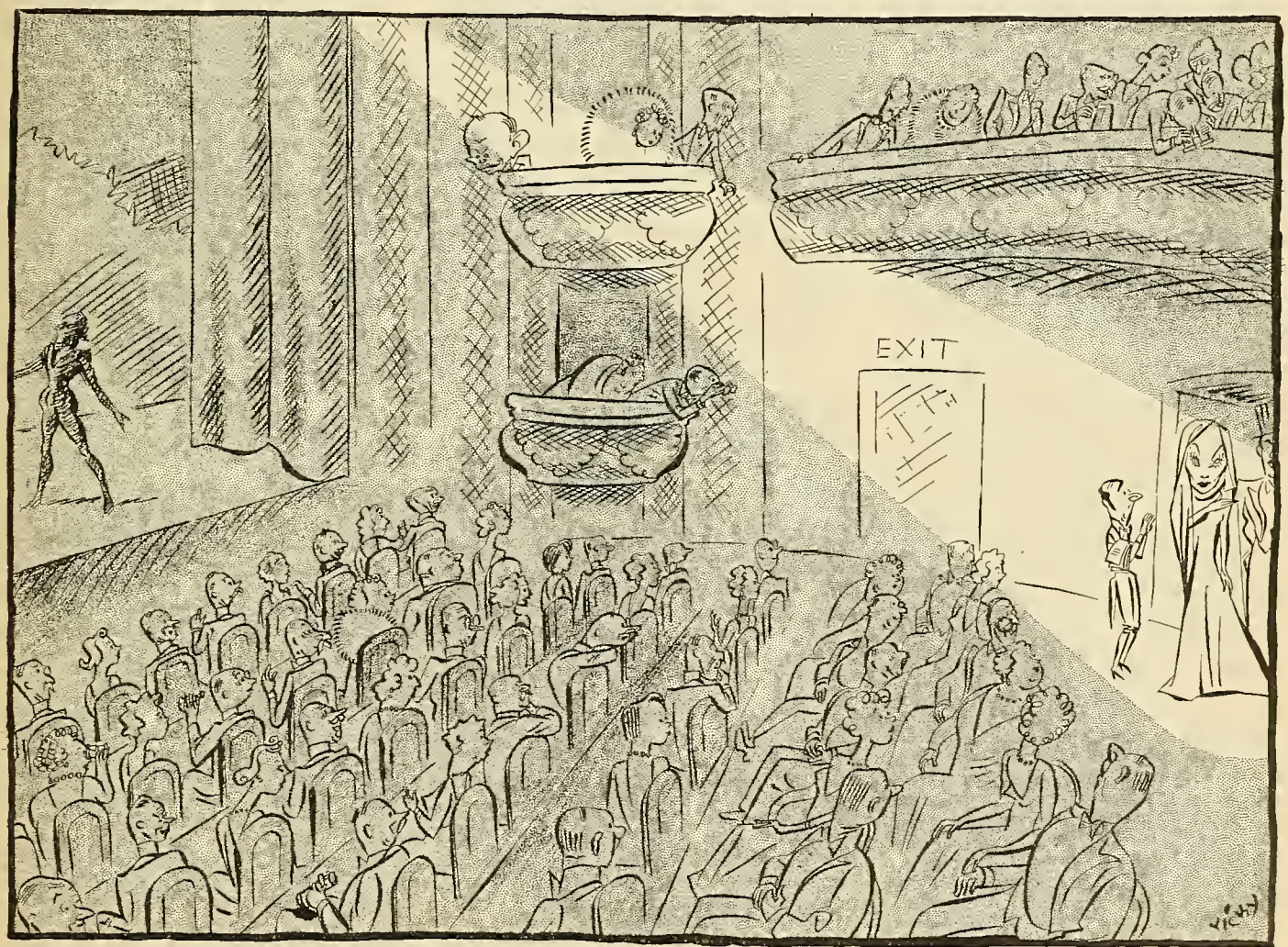
DAVE ROBSON SAYS:—

"In the pre-talkie era, a film sub-title could be changed to suit any particular language and therefore had a world market, but with the coming of sound the position was entirely changed and the film became limited to the countries of its origin. Having experimented for some months on different types of transmitters, and knowing only too well how one's intonation can be inverted, twisted and altered into something that it isn't over a long-distance telephone line, I got to work on a new scheme.

"I found, for instance, that by packing egaugnal seeds that I brought back from China recently, into the receptable behind an ordinary telephone mouthpiece, the receptivity of a word spoken in English became French. In getting through to the International Telephone Exchange, I said to the young lady, 'Good-morning, my dear friend,' to which came the prompt reply, 'Pardonniz?' I thereupon repeated my greeting and to my satisfaction came this reply, 'D'accord chere amie, bon jour! Nombre plait?' It worked ! ! ! !

"But unthought-of difficulties arose when I sent a unit packed with granules of pulverised oats impregnated with Scotch whiskey to a friend to try out from a Glasgow Post Office, having instructed him to give me the weather report at an appointed time.

"Unfortunately for me it happened to be a braw bricht moonlicht nicht in Glasgow, which came sizzling through the wires in an invertmuchish form, with the net result that my friend was charged with using bad language over the telephone, and that another good scheme to popularise the movies went wrong!"—Heath Robson.



"OH, LOOK — WHAT A BEAUTIFUL PERFORMANCE — !"

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WASTE—

In the British Studios 'They are Spending Themselves Out'

By our Studio Correspondent

MR. JOHN MAXWELL, in a speech to the shareholders of Associated British Picture Theatres, was the first person to draw public attention to the uneconomic and wasteful conditions which were prevailing in the film industry. What he said a year ago is equally true now.

There are innumerable channels of waste in the studios, whose stoppage would in the aggregate materially reduce production costs.

If criticism of wastage has hitherto been neglected or resented by producers, that is partly because the producers themselves are often a prime source of waste. The boom has attracted into the industry men who regard films as they might regard soap or sausages, or any other standardised commodity: simply a means to power and wealth. These men are ready to entrust the design and management of their studios to others, who know more about it than they do. Sometimes this delegation of control is justified; but often the absence of expert and disinterested supervision is fatally apparent.

Studios are places where speed of working demands the highest efficiency; and yet bad architectural arrangement, shoddily built apparatus, and incompetent technical service are frequently found in them. One cause of this lies in the ignorance of those who supply the finance, and the avarice of those who receive it. If equipment of a certain standard is specified, it will be in the interest of the contractors to whittle down the quality until it will just pass examination. This level of acceptance appears in some studios to be very low. The results of inefficient installation are far-reaching. When the equipment, if it were properly made, would be in steady and reliable operation, it is in fact constantly breaking down. A great strain is put upon the maintenance staff, who have to remedy defects under the difficult conditions of daily use. Such machines as are still going are overworked, and the normal flow of the studio is seriously disrupted.

It would appear, therefore, that the financiers of new studio construction, and their contractors, should employ a third party, who would be an independent expert of the highest authority, to examine and approve the workmanship of the buildings and their equipment. The money so expended would be far less than that now paid in dislocation and repair costs.

But if the material of the studio is thus often wastefully laid out, so also is the personnel. The advantages of friendship and obligation over technical and artistic qualifications, in obtaining a post in the film industry, are now notorious. That new talent must be brought into the studios and trained there is obvious; but it is not so clear that casual recommendation from high places, or dubious influences from outside, are the best means of selecting it. In the absence of some approved means of training, followed by an official and recognised stamp of distinction, a much closer and more impartial scrutiny should be made of applicants for posts in film studios.

Necessary qualifications are, however, only readily definable in the case of technicians, and it is hoped that the A.C.T. will firmly but not restrictively require them. The administrative staff can obviously not be chosen on such simple criteria of competence, and it is here that nepotism will flourish longest, and prove most difficult to eradicate. It is here too that another source of wastage is to be found. Due often to delay in the preparation of scripts, and to other more or less avoidable hitches in the earlier stages of production, studio space remains unoccupied for far longer than it should do. It is an axiom of film production that the level of overhead costs requires a continuous use of the whole plant; but it is an axiom which is still often ignored.

The inexpertness of a considerable part of the studio personnel leads also to a reduplication of positions, and a consequent rise in the salaries item of costs. Many members of the staff are mere passengers who ride the studio machine, pretending to help in its operation, but who really rely entirely on the help of others to cover up their failings. But there is another cause of reduplication which is especially noticeable in the camera crew. Here, the rising value placed on the chief camera-man has led him to consider various mechanical functions as unworthy of his attention, and he has therefore delegated them to an operator. The operator in turn has acquired such esteem that he scorns the simpler of these mechanical tasks, such as focus and lens-changing, and hands them on to an assistant. The assistant once again will not demean himself to load the magazines, or work the clappers, and so to each of these tasks still other people have to be allotted. In this way is established a hierarchy, based not on technical necessity, but on false prestige. A new outlook on the status of purely manual and mechanical work is required.

Such are some of the more obvious sources of waste in studios, together with the remedies which would seem to eliminate them best. But it is not to be supposed that these are the remedies which will be applied. When profits begin to decline (and in certain companies this has already occurred, though we are now in the most rewarding period of the boom), standards will at once be lowered. The preparation of stories may be scamped and the time allotted to each production reduced. Above all, the level of intelligence displayed in films may go down still further. Even to-day, there is a tragic underestimate of what the public will appreciate; it would be disastrous if even that estimate were to be thought too high.

In this desperate effort to stem the decline in the profitability of films, it is to be feared that the excellent side activities of certain studios may be curtailed. Of these, G.B.I. is an excellent example. The parent company is at present being reorganised, and it is greatly to be hoped that its instructional branch will in no way suffer. G.B.I. have now enjoyed many years of corporate existence and have developed a type of educational film which shows an excellent style.

The film industry should furthermore reflect that, though it is now very prosperous, the crest of the trade cycle will in two or three years be passed, and a new and very serious depression will have set in. This is the time, therefore, for a greater degree of co-operation and the pooling of resources. Joint action would reduce the altogether prohibitive salaries demanded by stars; and centralisation would release the vast amount of literary property now lying sterilised in the drawers of companies which do not propose to use it, when others would welcome that chance.

These are but random examples from the wider field which lies beyond our present scope. We cannot deal here with the ultimate wastages: waste of talent, waste of ideas, waste of capital—above all, waste of opportunity. But only when film companies have set their studios in order in the right way can they turn to the solution of these more fundamental problems.

BOOK REVIEW

THE NEW TECHNIQUE OF SCREEN WRITING. **Tamar Lane.** McGraw-Hill Publishing Co. Ltd. 15s.

This is not the first home-scenarist's *vade mecum*, nor will it probably be the last. But it is certainly the most compendious since the coming of sound brought to the script-writer a new dramatic reference and an added complexity. Story construction, treatment, dialogue, tempo, camera effects, title requirements, copyright, grades of payment and the mysterious rites of scenario departments are all analysed and explained in terms of American studio demand. Even the weight and size of the paper on which typescripts should be submitted are carefully enumerated. The author does not exaggerate in sub-titling his book "A Practical Guide to the Writing and Marketing of Photoplays." The only thing he cannot inculcate into his readers is the capacity to think and feel in terms of movie, and for that he cannot be blamed.

Two sections of the book are of academic interest. The first is an up-to-date dictionary of American studio jargon, notable for the naïve richness of its language. It is a pity that the more Rabelaisian terms like "bellylaugh" and "milking the audience" do not appear to have found their way into English studios. The second is the complete text of the Hayes Production Code, reproduced for guidance on questions of censorship. This producer-drafted code is pleasingly frank in its statements that murder, rape, seduction and adultery are "necessary plot material" (*i.e.*, good box office) and can therefore be admitted provided they are not made attractive.

Discussing the causes of trends and cycles in movie stories, Mr. Lane presents the opinions of the leading American scenario editors. Concerning the probable sources of film material in the near future that of Jeff Lazurus of Paramount is worth recording. He says: "As a result of the World War, Woodrow Wilson's trick of making statesmen bring the world into their confidence, the world fraternalism brought on by the depression, the new world-wide thinking about common economic problems, political situations and headline people, publications like *Time*, writers like Lippmann, the people of the earth are becoming conscious of the world they are actually living in. These current elements which are exciting people everywhere will sooner or later become our most important and most popular motion-picture subjects." S. L.

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

All Aboard (*Canadian Travelogue*)
DISTRIBUTION: Independent Film Distributors.
PRODUCTION: Alba Films.
HAMMERSMITH: Academy Dec. 10, 3 days
SHOREDITCH: Gaiety Dec. 3, 3 days
WALTON: Regent Dec. 14, 3 days

"'Alt! 'Oo Goes Theer?" (*Dunning Colour Cartoon*)
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
DRAWN BY: Anson Dyer
MANCHESTER: Tatler Theatre Dec. 21, 6 days

Bells of Belgium (*The bell-making industry*)
DISTRIBUTION: Butcher's
DIRECTION: Henri Storck
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 7, 6 days

Beside the Seaside (*Documentary of South Coast Resorts*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson
DORCHESTER: Palace Dec. 24, 3 days
HULL: Central Dec. 24, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Bedford Dec. 28, 6 days
Magnet Dec. 3, 3 days
SALISBURY: Picture House Dec. 3, 3 days
SOUTHEND: Kursaal Dec. 31, 3 days
WEYMOUTH: Regent Dec. 3, 3 days

Bottles (*Animated technicolour cartoon*)
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Harman and Ising
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. Dec. 3, 3 days

Celestial Rome (*Travelogue*)
DISTRIBUTION: British Lion
PRODUCTION: Deane H. Dickason
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. Dec. 7, 3 days

Cover to Cover (*A documentary of book production*)
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw
LONDON: Academy Dec. 1, indefinitely
Polytechnic, Regent St. Dec. 1, indefinitely

The Development of English Railways (*Educational*)
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.I.
DIRECTION: Mary Field
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 7, 6 days

Douro (*Portuguese travelogue*)
DISTRIBUTION: Viking
MANCHESTER: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 14, 6 days

Dragon of Wales (*A travelogue attempting to tackle economic conditions*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard
DUMFRIES: Regal Dec. 17, 3 days
GRANTHAM: Picture House Dec. 10, 3 days

The Early Bird and the Worm (*Colour Cartoon*)
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Harman and Ising
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 7, 6 days

Elephant City (*Travelogue*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
ROCHDALE: Empire Dec. 21, 6 days

Fire Fighters (*Documentary of the London Fire Brigade*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Peter Collin
BRISTOL: Hippodrome Dec. 14, 6 days
DORCHESTER: Palace Dec. 24, 3 days
LEICESTER: Floral Hall Dec, 14, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Bedford Dec. 3, 3 days
Tatler Dec. 14, 3 days
LONDON: Eros, Piccadilly Circus Dec. 7, 3 days
Studio Two, Oxford St. Dec. 31, 3 days
Victoria Station Dec. 7, 3 days
Waterloo Station Dec. 10, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Corona, West Gorton Dec. 14, 3 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews Dec. 10, 3 days
WOLVERHAMPTON: Scala Dec. 14, 6 days

Fox Hunt (*Colour Cartoon*)
DISTRIBUTION: London Films
PRODUCTION: Korda
DIRECTION: Hoppin, Gross and Meitner
LONDON: Curzon Dec. 1, indefinitely

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns. (*Historical survey of European affairs for the past 40 years*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: A.B. Svensk Filmindustri
ENGLISH VERSION: Donald Taylor
GRANTHAM: Empire Dec. 24, 3 days
LEEDS: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 21, 6 days
NEWCASTLE: News Theatre Dec. 21, 6 days

Joie de Vivre (*Cartoon*)
DISTRIBUTION: London Film Society
PRODUCTION: Hoppin, Gross and Meitner
MANCHESTER: Tatler Theatre Dec. 7, 6 days

Key to Scotland (*Documentary of Edinburgh*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson
GLASGOW: Empire, Clydebank Dec. 28, 3 days
King's Dec. 24, 3 days
Rialto, Cathcart Dec. 31, 3 days
Ritz, Oatlands Dec. 31, 3 days
GRIMSBY: Savoy Dec. 21, 6 days
KILMARNOCK: George Dec. 31, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Casino Dec. 21, 3 days
Plaza Dec. 14, 3 days
Tatler Dec. 14, 3 days

Kingdom for a Horse (*Cameo of Canadian horses and their uses*)
DISTRIBUTION: British Lion
DIRECTION: Gordon Sparling
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. Dec. 10, 3 days

Lobsters (*Documentary of lobster fishing*)
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Bury Films
DIRECTION: John Mathias and L. Moholy Nagy.
LONDON: Leicester Sq. Theatre Dec. 1, indefinitely

Low Water (*The daily routine of sailing a barge*)
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Turner-Robertson Films Ltd.
LONDON: Academy, Oxford St. Dec. 1, indefinitely

Men against the Sea (*Documentary of North Sea trawling*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
BOOTLE: Gainsborough Dec. 21, 3 days
DARLINGTON: Alhambra Dec. 10, 3 days
GALASHIELS: Pavilion Dec. 7, 3 days
HULL: Cecil Dec. 28, 6 days
IPSWICH: Hippodrome Dec. 3, 3 days
MIDDLESBROUGH: Pavilion Dec. 24, 3 days

Mickey Mouse
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists
PRODUCTION: Walt Disney

Band Concert
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 14, 6 days

Mickey's Fire Brigade
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 21, 6 days

Mickey's Grand Opera
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 28, 6 days

Mickey's Rival
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 14, 6 days

Moving Day
LONDON: Studio Two Dec. 7, 6 days
Tatler News Theatre Dec. 28, 6 days

On Ice
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 28, 6 days

Mickey Mouse—*continued*

Playful Pluto
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 14, 6 days

Puppy Love
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 21, 6 days

Thru' the Mirror
LONDON: Academy Dec. 1 onwards
Tatler News Theatre Dec. 21, 6 days

Monkey Love (*Colour Cartoon*)
DISTRIBUTION: Columbia
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. Dec. 7, 3 days

Night Mail (*Documentary of the Travelling Post Office*)
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Basil Wright and Harry Watt
GLASGOW: Mosspark Picture House Dec. 10
HULL: Cleveland Dec. 17
Monica Dec. 14
MANCHESTER: Capitol, Moss Side Dec. 24
Cheadle Royal, Cheadle Dec. 22
York, Hulme Dec. 24
SOUTHAMPTON: Film Society at Picture House Dec. 13
SUNDERLAND: Villiers Dec. 7

Old Sussex (*Travelogue*)
DISTRIBUTION: Fidelity
PRODUCTION: Alba Films
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. Dec. 3, 3 days

Pirate Party on Catalina Isle (*Musical in technicolour, featuring Buddy Rogers*)
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
DIRECTION: Louis Levine
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. Dec. 10, 3 days

Romantic Castle (*A German travelogue*)
DISTRIBUTION: Fidelity
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. Dec. 7, 3 days

Sacred City of the Mayan Indians (*Travelogue*)
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre Dec. 7, 6 days

Sardinia (*Travelogue*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
BARNSTAPLE: Gaumont Palace Dec. 17, 3 days
BRIDGEWATER: Palace Dec. 17, 3 days
MONMOUTH: Picture House Dec. 24, 3 days

Secret Hiding Places (*Survey of the many priest holes in English country houses*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Granville Squiers
BIRMINGHAM: Picture House, Northfield Dec. 14, 3 days
CHESTER: Gaumont Palace Dec. 21, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Casino Dec. 28, 6 days
Tatler Dec. 10, 3 days

Secrets of Life (*Imaginative descriptions of natural processes*)
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
PRODUCTION: G.B.I.
EDITING: Mary Field
TECHNICAL SUPERVISION: Percy Smith

Baby of the Rooks
SOUTHFIELDS: Central Hall Dec. 12

Butterflies and Nettles
DUNDEE: Empire Dec. 21, 3 days
SOUTHFIELDS: Central Hall Dec. 26

Hedgerows
ABERDEEN: News Theatre Dec. 7, 6 days

Home from the South
BUCKINGHAM: Chandos Dec. 24, 3 days

Shorts (cont.)

Secrets of Life *continued*

Living Lies
BUCKINGHAM: Chandos — Dec. 14, 3 days

Lupins
BUCKINGHAM: Chandos — Dec. 7, 3 days
GLASGOW: Mecca — Dec. 7, 6 days

Queer Diet
ABERDEEN: News Theatre — Dec. 14, 6 days

Wake Up and Feed
GLASGOW: Mecca — Dec. 24, 3 days

We are Seven
SHENLEY: Mental Hospital — Dec. 14, 3 days
SOUTHFIELDS: Central Hall — Dec. 19

Silly Symphonies
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists
PRODUCTION: Walt Disney

Babes in the Wood
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 14, 6 days

The China Shop
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 28, 6 days

Father Noah's Ark
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 21, 6 days

The Grasshopper and the Ants
LONDON: Studio Two — Dec. 3, 3 days

Lullabyland
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 21, 6 days

Peculiar Penguins
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 14, 6 days

Santa's Workshop
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 21, 6 days

Three Little Wolves
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 14, 6 days

Three Orphan Kittens
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 28, 6 days

Water Babies
LONDON: Tatler News Theatre — Dec. 28, 6 days

Sky Fishing (*Mountain fishing in Canada*)
DISTRIBUTION: British Lion
DIRECTION: Gordon Sparling
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. — Dec. 3, 3 days

The Seventh Day (*How London spends its Sunday*)
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: A. P. Barralet
DARLINGTON: Alhambra — Dec. 3, 3 days

Song of Ceylon (*Documentary*)
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
PRODUCTION: John Grierson
DIRECTION: Basil Wright
BARKING: Broadway — Dec. 7, 7 days
BRISTOL: News Theatre — Dec. 12
IPSWICH: Film Society — Dec. 13
LEAMINGTON: Regal — Dec. 10, 3 days

Tawny Owl (*Educational*)
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
DIRECTION: G.B.I.
LONDON: Curzon — Dec. 1, all month

Weather Forecast (*How information is gathered for official forecasts*)
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson
DIRECTION: Evelyn Spice
LIVERPOOL: Hope Hall — Dec. 24
Park Palace — Dec. 17
OXFORD: Film Society — Dec. 13
Scala — Dec. 13

Advertising Films

The Birth of the Robot (*Coloured puppet film*)
DISTRIBUTION and PRODUCTION: Gasparcolor for Shell
DIRECTION: Len Lye
LEEDS: Crescent Picture House, Dewsbury Road — Dec. 7, 6 days
Crossgates Picture House, Crossgates — Dec. 7, 6 days
Lounge Cinema, Headlingley — Dec. 7, 6 days

On Parade (*Coloured puppet film*
DISTRIBUTION and PRODUCTION: Gasparcolour for Horlick's Malted Milk Co.
DIRECTION: George Pal
BEDFORD: Granada Theatre, St. Peter's Street — Dec. 7, 6 days
BRISTOL: Eastville Hippodrome — Dec. 10, 3 days
DORCHESTER: Palace Theatre — Dec. 28, 3 days
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur News — Dec. 14, 6 days
EXMOUTH: Regal, St. Andrew's Rd. — Dec. 28, 3 days
GODALMING: Regal — Dec. 24, 3 days
LONDON: Kilburn Picture Palace, Belsize Road — Dec. 28, 6 days
Coliseum, Finchley — Dec. 14, 6 days
New Bohemia, Church End, Finchley — Dec. 14, 6 days
Marlborough, Holloway — Dec. 7, 6 days
Monseigneur News, Leicester Square — Dec. 14, 6 days
Plaza, Southfields — Dec. 14, 6 days
Astoria, Mitcham Road, Tooting — Dec. 14, 6 days
Granada, Tooting — Dec. 7, 6 days
Tottenham Palace, Tottenham — Dec. 14, 6 days
Monseigneur News, Trafalgar Square — Dec. 14, 6 days
Granada, Church Road, Willesden — Dec. 14, 6 days
SHREWSBURY: Granada — Dec. 14, 6 days

See How They Won
DISTRIBUTION and PRODUCTION: Revelation Films, for Boots Pure Drug Co.
BIRMINGHAM: Scala, Smallbrook Street — Dec. 14, 7 days
DOUGLAS, I.O.M.: Picture House, Strand St. — Dec. 7, 6 days
EASTBOURNE: Central — Dec. 1, 5 days
Eastern — Dec. 14, 6 days
GLASGOW: Florida, King's Park — Dec. 7, 6 days
LEICESTER: Prince's — Dec. 1, 5 days
NOTTINGHAM: Capitol — Dec. 14, 6 days
New Roxy — Dec. 14, 6 days

Foreign Films

Bonne Chance (*French comedy*)
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Sascha Guitry
STARRING: Sascha Guitry, Jaqueline Delublac
BIRMINGHAM: Film Society — Dec. 13
DUNDEE: Film Society — Dec. 6
INVERNESS: Film Society — Dec. 10
LEICESTER: Film Society — Dec. 19
STOWE: The School Film Society — Dec. 15

Fredlos ("*Outcast*"—*Finnish*)
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
PRODUCTION: Nordisk Films
DIRECTION: George Schneevoigt
LONDON: Academy — Dec. 1, indefinitely

La Dame aux Camellias (*French*)
DISTRIBUTION: Exclusive
DIRECTION: Fernand Rivers
STARRING: Yvonne Printemps
IVER (Bucks): Plaza — Dec. 31, 3 days

La Kermesse Heroique (*French*)
DIRECTION: Jacques Feyder
STARRING: Françoise Rosay, Jean Murat
LONDON: Studio Two, Oxford St. — Dec. 1, indefinitely

Marchand D'Amour (*French*)
EDINBURGH: Film Guild — Dec. 6
SOUTHAMPTON: Film Society — Dec. 13

So Ended a Great Love (*Austrian*)
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Karl Hartl
STARRING: Paula Wessely, Willi Forst
OXFORD: Union Cinema — Dec. 1, 5 days

Remous (*French*)
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Edmond Greville
STARRING: Jean Galland, Jeanne Boitel
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford St. — Dec. 1, 5 days

The Student of Prague (*Austrian*)
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Arthur Robison
STARRING: Adolph Wohlbruck, Dorothea Wieck
ABERDEEN: Film Society — Dec. 13
ABERYSTWYTH: Royal Pier Pavilion — Dec. 2

Under the Water (*French documentary with submarine photography*)
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Marcel de Hubsch
ENGLISH COMMENTARY: Alan Howland
ABERDEEN: Film Society — Dec. 13
BARKING: Broadway — Dec. 20, 3 days
GILLINGHAM: Embassy — Dec. 24, 3 days

Feature Films for December Release

All In (Gaumont-British)
DIRECTOR: Marcel Varnel
STARRING: Ralph Lynn, Jack Barty

Bride Walks Out (Radio)
DIRECTOR: Leigh Jason
STARRING: Barbara Stanwyck, Robert Young

Devil Doll (M.-G.-M.)
DIRECTOR: Tod Browning
STARRING: Lionel Barrymore, Maureen O'Sullivan

Everybody Dance (Gaumont-British)
DIRECTOR: Charles Reisner
STARRING: Cicely Courtneidge

Guns of the Pecos (Warner Bros)
DIRECTOR: Noel Smith
STARRING: Dick Foran

Love in Exile (G.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: Alfred L. Werker
STARRING: Clive Brook, Helen Vinson

Marriage of Corbal (G.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: Karl Grune
STARRING: Nils Asther, Noah Beery, Hugh Sinclair

One Rainy Afternoon (United Artists)
DIRECTOR: Jesse Lasky
STARRING: Francis Lederer, Ida Lupino

Poor Little Rich Girl (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Irving Cummings
STARRING: Shirley Temple

Swing Time (Radio)
DIRECTOR: George Stevens
STARRING: Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers

world FILM news

World Film News has now published nine numbers.

In these issues its contributors have included Bernard Shaw, J. B. Priestley, Cedric Belfrage, Stephen King-Hall, Graham Greene, Max Schach, Michael Balcon, Francis Meynell, Val Gielgud, Andrew Buchanan, John Grierson and many other celebrated men in the world of films and broadcasting.

It has raised many questions of public importance including *British Censorship Methods, American Film Finance, Sponsored Radio, Modern Trends of Showmanship* and *the effect of War Films on Children.* It has received wide appreciation in the Trade papers and the national press, in Wardour Street and the Studios.

The "Kine Weekly" says:
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H. Forsyth Hardy

TWO NORTHERN CAPITALS
A Comparison of Edinburgh and Oslo

MUSIC AND THE B.B.C.
David Mackie

FRANCE and THE FUTURE OF EUROPE
W. McStewart

SCOTTISH STAGE A New Feature *By Jack House*

Full Section of Book Reviews

- This issue also contains details of the Special Scenario Competition for a Scottish Documentary (Closing date, January 1st)
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world FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

BEST OF THE YEAR

Bernard Shaw, Robert Donat, Val Gielgud, Jimmy Nervo, Cavalcanti, Oscar Deutsch, John Grierson, Andrew Buchanan, Len Lye, Forsyth Hardy, Max Schach, Sybil Thorndike, C. B. Cochran

One of the most remarkable documentary successes of recent years —

'THE NUTRITION FILM' is now being handled for theatrical distribution by

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'ENOUGH TO EAT?'

★ ***Read how the Press greeted this film:***

THE TIMES: 'A valuable contribution to our knowledge of a problem of national importance . . . While the lesson of the film is vigorous and direct, the producers must be complimented on their avoidance of extreme cases.'

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MANCHESTER GUARDIAN: 'It is the first film to show the effects of poverty on the diet and growth of the nation and it is to be hoped that it will prove the starting point for a series of similar productions on problems which should be the concern of every member of the community.'

THE NEWS CHRONICLE: 'The most searching things in the picture are the little interviews with poor mothers struggling bravely to feed their families, with very small incomes, and the scenes in which children figure.'

THE KINEMATOGRAPH WEEKLY: '. . . of absorbing interest . . . No showman need rely on any sense of public spirit as an excuse for its presentation. It is entertaining as well as a valuable social sidelight on one of the most important subjects affecting every human being.'

Another new and entertaining film

'A SCRATCH MEAL WITH MARCEL BOULESTIN'

is being distributed by

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Press Comments:

THE EVENING STANDARD: '. . . *amusing running commentary . . . useful tips . . . There is nothing to be done but to see for yourself how cunningly and quickly M. Boulestin cuts up an onion.*'

CINEMA: '*Monsieur Boulestin, celebrated gastronome and artist of the kitchen, showed what a bumper meal can be made from a few scraps of chicken, some vegetables and a few eating apples!*'

LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 1200 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport, Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston.
Synod Hall ...	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maidenhead.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Stratford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation ...	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork.
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth.
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz	Doncaster.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.

EDGAR ANSTEY
RALPH BOND
ANDREW BUCHANAN
DONALD CARTER
ALB. CAVALCANTI
WILLIAM COLDSTREAM
ARTHUR ELTON
MARY FIELD
ROBERT FLAHERTY
JOHN GRIERSON
MARION GRIERSON
STANLEY HAWES
J. B. HOLMES
HUMPHREY JENNINGS
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Best wishes
for the
New Year
to readers of
World Film News
from the
Documentary Group

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world FILM news
AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

VOL. I NO. 10 PRICE: ONE SHILLING JANUARY 1937

Best of the Year

BERNARD SHAW

Of the seventy-eight films listed I can remember only three: *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *La Kermesse Héroïque*. The last was by far the most intelligently and artistically handled.

As to Romeo, the conviction of the directors that they knew better than Shakespeare how to tell the story resulted in follies and stupidities that would have wrecked any ordinary play with an ordinary cast. Fortunately the play was foolproof, and the cast very strong.

As You Like It was badly cast, barring, of course, Mr. Leon Quartermaine's feat of making Jacques bearable and even delightful. It was also badly cut, proving that the play cannot do without Adam and Touchstone. But Elizabeth Bergner's dramatic imagination is so powerful, and her skill so perfect that the moment she dressed as a lad she became a lad. An unfeminine Rosalind is impossible: all the great Rosalinds have been ultra-feminine.

VAL GIELGUD

I would place my selection in the following order: *La Kermesse Héroïque*, *Mayerling*, *Libelled Lady*. The last only gets in by a short head, defeating *My Man Godfrey* only by virtue of a personal predilection for Miss Myrna Loy as opposed to Miss Carole Lombard, and *Top Hat* because, good though the latter was, I had experienced the formula before.

I doubt if there can be any question at all about *La Kermesse Héroïque*. For wit, acting, pictorial beauty, and neatness of story, it stands out a mile. It bears the hallmark of that real taste which is so seldom achieved in the cinema. It is, in brief, a work of art.

Mayerling is, I think, chiefly remarkable for the acting of the two principals. M. Boyer and Mlle. Darrieux, faced with a true story whose

"Mutiny on the Bounty"

principal ingredients are those of a novelette, never lacked conviction for an instant. It is only necessary to think of what Hollywood would have done with *Mayerling* to realise how good *Mayerling* is as it stands.

Libelled Lady, on the other hand, shows just how good Hollywood can be when it finds itself with a range of subject and characterisation which it really understands. The technical brilliance of this picture, the terrific vitality of its star performances, the real brilliance of the dialogue, set this picture in the very front rank of entertainment, and as long as Hollywood aims at entertainment it is invincible. It is when Hollywood hears about Art with a Capital A, and begins dabbling in such dangerous pools as the classical works of Tolstoi and Shakespeare, that Hollywood comes so severely to grief—the more ostentatiously because it persists in spending so very much more money on its failures than any other country can on its successes.

CHARLES B. COCHRAN

Of the films I have seen this year I liked *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* most.

A show of hands goes up for "Mutiny on the Bounty" "Louis Pasteur" "Mr. Deeds" and "Kermesse Héroïque" in the array of varied opinion

ROBERT DONAT

Quite accidentally I find that I missed most of the big commercial successes including even *Mutiny on the Bounty* so that my judgment is necessarily limited. Also, I presume I must exclude Korda films, although I would have liked to have said, that, in my opinion, both *Ghost Goes West* and *Rembrandt* took us considerably further than any similar films.

I am left with the following, all of which delighted me for different reasons:

Top Hat. Because of Astaire's rhythmic feet and Mark Sandrich's rhythmic footage.

Desire. Because of Lubitsch—to me four-fifths a perfect film.

Secret Agent. Because of Hitch, and I wished I had been in it.

Modern Times. Because of Charlie's inability to streamline his own ageless nonsense.

These Three. Because of Sam Goldwyn's courage. I sat with him in a Wardour Street projection theatre, where I previewed the film; he had come hot from a fight with the censor and the point which he had fought for and won was a very subtle one, and showed a side to the commercial Sam that I had never suspected.

La Kermesse Héroïque. Because of its complete perfection and because I still cannot believe I have the good fortune to be directed by Feyder and supervised by Korda all at once.

SYBIL THORNDIKE

The films I have most enjoyed are:

Rhodes of Africa because I think the story an amazing one and the acting living and sincere.

Night at the Opera because I think the Marx Brothers are "outsize comedians," and I would go anywhere to see them!

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town because it made me feel warmed and happy.

ANDREW BUCHANAN

The Great Ziegfeld was, I think, the greatest musical spectacle I ever saw; technically, it was practically flawless, and the rather slight biographical background most excellently handled.

Night Mail gave me the most exciting half-hour of the year, proving again the existence of real drama in the everyday world that is waiting to be observed and captured by creative people.

Tudor Rose was, I feel, the most dignified, restrained, and intelligent picture in historical cinema, lovely to look upon, and listen to, containing deft touches, and a perfect ending, that revealed Robert Stevenson's sensitive directorial ability. *Top Hat* appealed to me quite as much! I liked its slick tempo—its self assurance—its dialogue.

Things to Come I liked for its conception, and the execution thereof, despite the fact that this included the execution of the characters on the altar of art direction.

Louis Pasteur was surely one of the most serious efforts ever attempted in screen biography, and what a change to find adequate praise given to Science and Medicine instead of to the inevitable Warrior, and what a pity *Rembrandt* did not achieve as much for Art.

Mr. Deeds must be included as a vivid example of the greatness of simplicity, when handled with understanding and humour.

Nursery Island was equally big in a little way, proving that Features should be measured in terms of quality, and not reels.

Finally Hitchcock's *Sabotage*, which contains probably more originality than all the lot of them put together. May his genius for making unlikely events likely, and likely events unlikely, go on for ever.

JOHN GRIERSON

I did not see *Sabotage*, *The Informer*, *Ah, Wilderness*, *The Petrified Forest* or *Green Pastures*—all or any of which might have counted. The others I estimate as follows. The most moving was *Pasteur* and I wish I had made it. The most memorable was *Rembrandt*. The most important comedy was *Modern Times*, though I found *Desperado* and *Kermesse* the most amusing ones. The best piece of sheer movie was the mail-throwing sequence in *Night Mail*, cut by Watt. The best piece of screen journalism was the Father Divine item in *March of Time*, which was banned—out of jealousy, no doubt—by Lord Tyrrell. The most exciting film experiment was Len Lye's manipulation of colour changes in *Rainbow Dance*. The best piece of educational work was the ill-photographed, badly developed, out of sync., object lesson on soil erosion made under the Bantu Education Experiment. The most vital slab of propaganda was *The Nutrition Film*, made by Anstey for the Gas Light and Coke. The best minor film was *F Man*. The only classics I saw during the year were Jean Renoir's *La Chienne* (banned) and Jean Vigo's *L'Atalante*, both French and both now a couple of years old. Nothing else, I estimate, was in the same street of æsthetic as these two masterworks.

FORSYTH HARDY

It has been an unusually good year for films. From a dozen which have added something to cinema's stature I would select *Rembrandt*, *The Story of Louis Pasteur*, and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, with, among the shorts, *Night Mail* and *Nutrition*.

In one sense *Rembrandt* must rank as the most ambitious and courageous film of the year. It ignored the box-office and the mass of convention by which everyday films make their appeal and set out to give the portrait of a man with the sincerity and integrity which, common in other mediums of expression, are seldom encountered in the cinema. Korda and Laughton and Zuckmayer (for cinema is a co-operative art) had something to say about Rembrandt and they said it with the frankness and freedom of a biographer, yet using skilfully their own medium of film.

Pasteur similarly was a breakaway from the conventional stuff of the movie, though it was not to the same extent ambitious in treatment. The story of a singlehanded struggle for scientific truth was moving and impressive and Paul Muni's performance as the stubborn little chemist both gave it authority and made it memorable.

Mr. Deeds I liked immensely, immoderately—because it had spirit, freshness and good humour and because Capra's theme related to matters peculiarly to-day's. I would not, of course, seek seriously for a sociological purpose to justify a natural reaction to a brilliantly handled comedy.

Night Mail I thought the most exciting and the most skilful documentary of the year and, as a Scot, I am specially grateful for the exquisitely perceptive crossing the Border sequence.

Nutrition, short in footage, stood out from the year's cinema for the size and scope of its subject.

MAX SCHACH

Rather than state which I consider the best films of the past year I should prefer to say which films made the most lasting impression on my memory.

Modern Times because Chaplin always finds new territory.

Mutiny on the Bounty for the incomparable way in which a sensational treatment has been transformed into a perfect artistic work by Charles Laughton, Clark Gable and Franchot Tone.

Top Hat, as a perfect example of a rhythmic, charming musical comedy—something that has so often been misinterpreted.

The Ghost Goes West, for its charm and production qualities and for showing us how a Hungarian producer can get away with a French director and English star to make a real Scotch story with such success.

JIMMY NERVO

Mutiny on the Bounty. Flawless acting, perfect in detail and so gripping I forgot I was watching a film.

My Man Godfrey. Such clever dialogue and so unique, most entertaining.

The Great Ziegfeld. Perhaps this should be a second as it was incomparable as a production film.

LEN LYE

Fury. To me was the immediate pictorial film manner of presenting story meat. Like *March of Time* sometimes presents its material. The only other film that had this 'immediate' element so strongly was *Mantrap*, the silent Clara Bow-Menjou film.

La Kermesse Héroïque. Smacking of wine spillings and Rimbaud turgidity it smelt fine and authentic.

Mutiny on the Bounty. The arrival at the South Seas was a swell film middle: though it was shiny M.G.M. postcard, it kept scale.

Louis Pasteur. The most morally satisfying, but the entertainment value of the others, plus their film efficiencies, win out.

OSCAR DEUTSCH

From the point of view of quality, I would select *Things to Come* and *Romeo and Juliet* as the best films of the year.

Films which resulted in the highest box office bookings during the year were: *First a Girl*, *Top Hat*, *Dark Angel*. *The Ghost Goes West*, *Littlest Rebel*, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *These Three*, *Swing Time*.

ALBERTO CAVALCANTI

1936 gave us, among many others, three great films—a biography, a drama and a comedy. *The Story of Louis Pasteur*, *Fury*, and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*. They were made by outstanding directors and played by the three greatest cinema actors—Paul Muni, Spencer Tracy, and Gary Cooper.

Curiously enough, although very different in style, these three films have a strong point in common in that they deal with important social problems, and, if the last is somewhat lighter and more personal, it is nevertheless a brilliant satire of the American bourgeoisie.

It is interesting to note that ten years ago female stars such as Nazimova, Pickford, and Swanson were high above their male partners. Nowadays, things have changed, and the same difference of level exists the other way round.

Sensationalism, sex, and sentimentality are giving way to more substantial matters in film-subject.

EDITOR W.F.N.

Green Pastures. It rings true and gives an insight into the psychology of a race.

Bullets and Ballots. Moves fast and stimulates contemplation on methods of racketeering lawfully employed this side of Chicago.

Mayerling. Well produced and so ably directed that the slimness of the plot does not matter at all.

L'Atalante. From a direction point of view, the most imaginative film I have ever seen.

CAMERAMAN ON A MAGIC CARPET

In the old days a cameraman passed as a tourist, and policemen would stop on the street to see what makes the movies move! Now, all over the world, officials, politicians, militarists, business men, and even the general public think twice before they let the cameraman shoot.

CHARLES W. HERBERT, who has wandered the globe since the end of the War, certainly holds the movie-man's championship for covering ground. He is now in China making items for *March of Time*. His passport probably contains the following facts: blue eyes, fair hair, weight 120 lbs., age 40.

Herbert started off as a free-lance getting acquainted with America. Later he joined Fox on a roving commission to shoot items for their Magic Carpet of Movietone. This job took him to practically every country in the world. Herbert had no personal credit on the opening titles of the films he shot and in fact saw his own work only by chance on his travels as the negative was sent to New York for developing and the films were cut and edited there. All he saw of his work at the time was the short pieces of negative he developed *en route* for exposure tests. To those who knew Herbert's work there could never be any question of the origin of his items, for the startling photography and courageous use of filters always marked his stuff indelibly. On the Magic Carpet job he won for himself the highest place among camera technicians for exterior work.

Lucille Herbert, his wife, always travelled with him. Her job was to make contacts, obtain permits and facilities and do the research work necessary for scripting and commentary. On reaching a country they would travel around with their small van which in a tiny space accommodated cameras, lights and sound equipment.

All this was high pressure work. It was complicated by lack of experienced assistance, for a sound man did not always travel with them, and Herbert had to cope with the whole job and more often than not, the physical labour of unloading and carrying the camera and motor from location to location. This, in the end, was responsible for dislocating a shoulder for Herbert is of extremely slight build, and the average newsreel-type camera and motor weighs over a hundredweight. The greatest of all complications was the difficulty over customs and permits. Of this he says:

"Years before the enactment of regulations, the roving cameraman wandered at will here and there about the globe, always getting concessions and permissions that an insurance man or a shoe salesman would not dream of requesting. In those days a cameraman carried all of his equipment slung over his shoulders on long straps, and walked off a boat or train like any ordinary passenger. He usually passed as a tourist. Even when the inspectors recognised him as a cameraman, they smiled a little and ventured a few questions about Hollywood, to which the versatile newsreel man always had a pleasing answer. Police stopped on the street to take a peek through the camera, to see what makes the movies move. Armies stood at attention and charged proudly just to show the world what they could do. Industries opened up their doors—local society leaders and the man on the street turned out as extras for the mere thrill of being before a camera.

From a Fox Magic Carpet Item

"Now, militarists draw a cloak of secrecy about them lest the eye of the camera give away some guarded information or show up some inefficiency which they want to keep for themselves. Industry managers ponder and put off decision until the next Board of Directors meeting. Home town folk stop to wonder if it will be proper. Hunted men duck and hide as the sweeping eye of the camera comes into the lumber camp, factory, mine or ship where they are working. Politicians hesitate to appear in scenes that might be used by their opponents to kindle opposition. Churches hesitate—with some of the leaders for and some against invading the sanctity of the church with a movie camera.

"Now a cameraman with a truck and complete sound equipment makes a rather startling sight to the Customs Inspector that spots him from the horde of tourists that daily arrive by steamer and train. There he stops and his troubles begin. He has to try every means to enter a country and get a workable permit.

"Strict regulations laid down by various countries are made as a result of offended national feeling caused by the work of the free-lance newsmen and misinformation obtained in the field from none too seriously patriotic citizens. The difference in the views held by various nationals as to what is detrimental has also caused the cameraman grief.

"What one country regards as a national insult, another merely considers as an unusual and interesting fact. To make a picture of an Italian eating spaghetti is almost a criminal offence in Italy."

When working on the Magic Carpet series Herbert thought he was handling a tough job and after several years away from America was beginning to think regretfully of his log cabin in the Rockies. Finally the Magic Carpet folded up and the Herberts got around to visiting the log cabin. But it was not long before Herbert started looking for real punishment, so when *March of Time* came along he agreed to do location work for them.

From China he writes:

"Truly this has been my toughest assignment—for several reasons. We were the first to come in under the most recent ruling

REVISED REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO THE MAKING OF MOTION PICTURES IN CHINA BY FOREIGNERS.

They were passed in April and we arrived in June. Believe you me they are tight and everybody is united in the one determination of not allowing bad pictures to be made about China. They do prevent this but they do not make provision for the making of good pictures. It took me a month to get a workable permit and the only way I could get it was to make a personal appeal to the Generalissimo himself and show him some sample *March of Times* and outline my plans for China. He and Madame agreed wholeheartedly and gave instructions to their closest assistant to help us to work. But soon afterwards they took themselves away to the mountains to escape the heat and when the other officials who had been blocking the way found that they still had a clear track they still did all they could to block me and believe me it's been tough to get anything. We did manage to knock out a very complete record of Shanghai as the Fifth Largest City in the world and a number of other minor subjects.

"Another thing which retarded us was the fact that the President of the Central Party was shot by a photographer as soon as the latter had taken his picture. Next the Japanese tension. Next the spy mania which China has now cultivated and made to flourish in the minds of all those who have a stick in their hands. Next, at the time that Kawagoe, the Japanese Ambassador, visited Chang Kai Shek, six photographers disguised as diplomats crashed the gate behind him and even went into the Generalissimo's house and snapped right and left. That brought about an iron-clad ruling that barred any foreigner from an official gathering.

"All these difficulties were capped by an attack of the worst kind of Chinese dysentery which I hope to recover from in Hawaii where some shooting is scheduled. There we can both have some of the much-needed rest which we have never had time to take since we started to be the Herberts who wander here and there making movies and leading an interesting life—so say all we meet."

In addition to the Magic Carpet items on London, English rural life and Ireland, all of which were remarkable for their extraordinarily fine photography, Herbert has made *Mediterranean Memories*, *The Square Rigger*, *Desert Patrol* and *Saharianos in Tripolitania*—among many others.

M.A.T.

Meetings and Acquaintances

ESLANDA GOODE ROBESON, known as Essie to her friends, is making her debut as a professional actress in her husband, Paul Robeson's, new picture, *Big Fella*, a British Lion film. She plays the part of a coloured café keeper. Her next part is the Arab chief's wife in the film Paul will make after his month's concert tour in the Soviet Union. They will go on location to Cairo for three weeks.

Born in Washington, D.C., Essie was an analytical chemist before she married. She gave up chemistry, and for several years concentrated on managing the business side of her husband's career. When they settled in England, she became interested in Africa, and has been a student of anthropology at London University under Malinovski for some years. Last summer she went to South and Central Africa where she took a unique series of photographs. Her nine-year-old boy, Pauli, went along with her, and they motored several thousand miles through the country, living much of the time in African villages. She is the author of *Paul Robeson, Negro*, which was published in England some years ago.

Has decided views on education, is always perfectly dressed, and is a marvellous cook; her vegetables once eaten are never forgotten.

Recently there were great preparations at Denham. The Duchess of Kent was going to look over Korda's studio. Everyone waited expectedly—a vast car slid up to the main entrance—everyone dashed forward to open the door—two young women stepped out. Which was the Duchess? In unison they said, "Miss Holloway, please." They were just another couple of would-be stars!

DOROTHY HOLLOWAY, assistant casting director to London Films, has to cope with the film-struck youth, middle-age and old age of Britain. The strangest letters arrive by every post, the most pathetic and comic interviews take place in her office; and always she is the incarnation of tact. At the age of eighteen she began her career as a municipal clerk at Bexhill. Then she became in turn accountant to the technical journal, *Twentieth Century Advertising*, secretary to Brendon Bracken of *English Life;* and circulation manager of *Advertising World.*

Twelve years ago "Holly" was lured into the film world. She became secretary to Harold Lipson, and stayed with him for five years. Then she went to Paramount British Productions as secretary to the casting director; passed over to London Film Productions in the same capacity; later becoming assistant casting director. She has also done free lance journalism, and is part author of Paul Robeson's recent film, *Song of Freedom.* She has several other scripts on hand.

Ambition—to tour the world; in the meantime her hobbies are photography ("I'm an awful amateur," she says), gardening and Chinese porcelain.

DENIS MYERS, has just returned from a holiday in Algiers to his labours in Fleet Street, congratulating himself on missing night work on the Constitutional crisis. His interviews for *World Film News* will be resumed next month.

Meet **AL LEWIN.** For twelve years intimately associated with the late Thalberg, he is in Europe taking a four-month vacation before going over to Paramount. Al Lewin, five feet of genial benignity, looking more like the American counterpart of Strube's little man than a Hollywood big shot, supervised the production of *Mutiny on the Bounty, Romeo and Juliet*, and the forthcoming *Good Earth*, Thalberg's last picture. He says that *Good Earth*, which took 2½ years to make, was a vast effort to show agricultural China with absolute honesty. He believes that public taste has outgrown the "boy meets girl" theme.

IAN DALRYMPLE, Scenarist-in-chief to Victor Saville Productions. Born in South Africa and educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge, he is fast proving that the Public School and the 'Varsity provides a starting-ground for a successful film career comparable to the best news-vendor's stance. For some years supervising Editor to Gaumont-British and Gainsborough, he turned to free-lance writing and joined Victor Saville early in 1936. Has made the film adaptation of *Storm in a Teacup* and assisted in its production as co-director.

Believes films will never become an Art if only for the reason that no really creative artist would choose film as his medium for self expression.

MAURICE JAUBERT (see *W.F.N.* July issue), at present in London working on soundscore for Cavalcanti's *We Live in Two Worlds*—a film of Switzerland. Jaubert, young, energetic, and a typical Southerner, regards music for films as separate art, demands simplicity, has no inhibitions about different instruments for recording. Was recently seen at Simpson's in the Strand fierily denouncing present-day Sibelius cult to protesting J. B. Priestley. Jaubert is a fast worker, supports the Front Populaire, has boundless admiration for Milhaud, Ibert, Honegger. His wife sings his compositions superbly and looks lovely at the same time.

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WORLD FILM NEWS: EDITOR, MARION A. GRIERSON; BUSINESS MANAGER, STUART LEGG.

EDITORIAL REFERENCES

FILM COMMISSION: Proposed by Moyne Committee that Government appoint body of two or four men to watch operation of the new Quota Act, and make proposals for promoting quality and interests of Brtish films.

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE: A Company Limited by Guarantee, with no share capital but assisted by government grant, formed to encourage use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction.

THE TRAVEL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION: A non-trading organisation formed with government support whose purpose is to spread throughout the world knowledge of the products and industries as well as the amenities and attractions of the British Isles.

FILM COUNCIL: A research unit set up by *World Film News* to investigate and report on the financial and political background of the film industry.

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE: An institution to promote the educational and informative contacts of the British Empire, and to circulate Empire Films to racial and educational organisations in the United Kingdom.

FEDERATION OF BRITISH FILM SOCIETIES: Formed to advise, co-ordinate and encourage the formation and work of societies, and to facilitate the booking of films.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL: Formed by government support to make better known in foreign countries the cultural side of British life: its language, art, music and literature.

EDITORIAL

A Necessary Reform

WE HAVE RECEIVED an invitation from a Governor of the Film Institute to outline a scheme of reform. We are grateful for this compliment to our disinterestedness, and there is no question that if the B.F.I. is to be reformed, the plan must come from without. Its present constitution does not provide the conditions for a clear and progressive policy.

We are asked to make specific and constructive proposals. The pleasure is ours. First of all, we invite the governing body to reconsider its position. By reason of its own heterogeneous nature, it has failed completely in the direction of policy; and its wisest gift to the Institute would be to resign. Its last act should be to invite the Government to nominate four men, with records of disinterested public service, to govern the Institute for a period of two years. From their experience during that time they will no doubt be able to advise the Privy Council as to the best method of manning the Governing Board in future.

The reasons for this drastic but necessary step are known to all observers and friends of the educational and cultural cinema. Individually able the present governors may be in their own spheres, but in the paramount matter of co-ordinating educational and cultural film interests they have been an irritant and a hindrance, not a help. It is a common comment on the Institute that it moves into action with three millstones round its neck—the sectional interests of exhibitors, producers and educators. They are only sectional because their representatives have not been able to take the larger point of view which is vital in a co-ordinating body of this sort. Certain of the governorships, moreover, would seem to be life-time appointments. These personal holdings are a progressive danger, disturbing as they do the authority of the manager and imposing an undue influence on the Institute's decisions.

It should be a condition of any continued support from the Privy Council that the new governing body carries with it real public confidence. If the Institute is to be the important national body it set out to be, the highest representatives of the public interest are not too high for its council board. The Moyne Committee has proposed a Film Commission of four men to look after the progress of the film industry. They are to have no professional or financial interest in the affairs on which they sit. We propose a similar policy for the Film Institute. There is no reason why it should not be decided later on to make it a sub-section of the Film Commission itself.

One major error of the Film Institute in the past has been its tendency to claim sovereignty over any and every activity which, it thought would look well on its annual report. It has announced half a hundred national and international functions when it had neither the finance nor the organisation for more than a few. We propose the Film Institute concentrate on the one job it can do best—the service of the children and the development of the film in education. Let it leave the two Federations of Film Societies to look after the interests of the cultural films. They are spontaneous groups. Less inhibited by the extraneous interests of commerce, education and mere moralism, they are better equipped to look after the interests of art.

Similarly, the interests of Empire information are better left to the Imperial Institute. Here again is a spontaneous growth and an instrument admirably fitted by experience and contacts for the purpose in hand. It is a solid basis for the interchange of Empire Films and the guidance of Empire Governments and it would be waste of public money and public time for the Film Institute to overlap its activities.

In the matter of contacts with foreign countries, there is again a body more fitted to perform the very important function of getting our films shown abroad. This is the British Council which, in co-operation with the Travel and Industrial Association, is doing practical and useful work under the efficient chairmanship of Mr. Guedalla.

As for the health of the commercial cinema the Film Institute will be wise to leave that to the Trade: under the guidance, if necessary, of the proposed Film Commission. Its incursions into Trade matters during the last three years have been, to say the least, unfortunate. Ill-informed criticisms and gratuitous postures of superiority have created unnecessary oppositions. To an industry which has shown many signs recently (in Shakespeare and Dickens films, in *Pasteurs*, etc.) of improving its qualities, moralising strictures can seem desperately unreal.

Our constructive proposals are therefore very simple. Leave the Empire field to the Imperial Institute, the foreign field to the British Council, the æsthetic field to the Federations of Film Societies. Concentrate on the children and the development of the educational field, and help in every way to promote among the public interest in the more ambitious efforts in cinema which are now coming from the producers. Above all see to it that the Institute starts a fresh page in the matter of governorship.

This plan which we propose concentrates the various fields in the right and proper hands. It would make for better work and in a very short time for a better understanding. The organised alliance which must finally result between the Imperial Institute, the British (Educational) Film Institute, the British Council and the Federations of Film Societies would be a more real and living structure than the present catch-as-catch-can collection of panels into which the Film Institute has so unfortunately sunk.

World Film News
wishes its Readers
A Happy
and Prosperous
New Year

Discipline—
The Price of Progress

THE STARTLING REPORT on British film finance published on another page should add weight to the Moyne Committee's proposal for a *Film Commission*. The suggestion is that a Government appointed body of two to four men should keep watch on the operations of the new Quota Act and make such proposals as will promote both the quality and the interest of the British cinema. A condition of appointment is that members are to have no financial entanglements in the Industry. It is suggested that such a Film Commission might help to bring order to British film finance and represent the film world before Parliament and the public.

We welcome the proposal. It has become necessary to order and progress. Our report of film finance describes a state of anarchy and chaos. Lunatics vie with imbeciles in gambling away a very substantial part of the nation's money. The noble opportunity of millions of money for creative work is being wasted by adventurers and con men. Extravagance in studio production, insane competition in theatre building and a speculative boom in the creation of studio space are other disorderly elements in a disgraceful demonstration. The lunatic fringe in the British film industry is more than a fringe and unless it is surgically dealt with it may bring to ruin our hopes of a great British cinema. The Americans, who best know the symptoms are indeed openly laughing at us—and waiting for the crash.

The Moyne proposal has frightened the Trade. There is already a cry to save our freedom and whatnot, especially whatnot. But the freedom of anarchy which we now doubtfully enjoy is not worth defending. It loads our creative work with impossible overheads and puts the creative mind in the grip of any smooth-tongued rogue who can wheedle money from the City. It puts a premium on financial manipulation and makes a side issue of what should be our major concern—the quality of our films and the articulation of our national life. It brings under a single cloud of disrepute the adventurous and the adventurer. The Film Commission would bring that order out of disorder which we have failed to create ourselves.

Why should the Film Trade complain? The Film Commission would at last provide them with a national front and give them an entry into the national counsels. Many men in the Trade are anxious to demonstrate their sense of public responsibility and nothing was more impressive in the recent conference on children's films than the high calibre of the film representatives. Here is their opportunity to improve the standing of the industry, give it a much needed discipline, encourage its best elements and ensure its development in the national interest.

For our glossary of organisations mentioned on this page, please refer to cols. 2 and 3, page 6.

People's Pictures and People's Palaces

CENTRE OF London's sea-going trade, its liveliest, busiest, and friendliest area, the East End offers an unusual angle to an investigation of the cinema's effects upon the lives of working people. Here are dockers and clerks, transport workers and warehousemen, shop-assistants, and salesmen, shop-keepers, and street-traders. Here Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, Indian seamen and Chinese rub shoulders in these dingy nineteenth century streets. How does the cinema, the twentieth century, affect the lives of the people living and working in this overcrowded, drear district of London?

Thirty or forty years ago, the only entertainment accessible to the people of East London was in the public-house or the music-hall, both for adults and both mainly frequented by men. For young people there was no escape from the indescribable social conditions of those days; the foul slums and over-crowded tenements; the long hours and low wages; the hopeless ignorance and crime raised by such conditions.

Religious bodies labouring against the spiritual inertia created by squalor and misery, brought music to aid their efforts, music mainly rendered by brass or silver bands, a form of entertainment which still holds a place in the affections of the older people in East London.

Much has been changed since forty years ago, when the revelations of Charles Booth and others shocked the world. There are still slums, there is still overcrowding, wages in many cases are still too low and hours too long. But many improvements have been secured and the long efforts of winning these has made this section of London's people a conscious, educated, and civic-minded community.

All this can be seen to-day in all the many phases of East End life and leisure, in the better dress of the people, in the many social activities, in the network of municipal enterprises and in the social and educational centres crowded with young people.

In the world of entertainment, the cinema now plays the all-important part, though less in the case of the older than the younger people. The middle-aged and elderly men continue to find their main relaxation in pigeon-clubs, in darts, matches and championships, in their working men's clubs, their Trade Unions and political organisations and more recently in radio construction and listening. But women and young people depend nowadays almost entirely for their entertainment upon the cinema.

Music-halls have vanished. In the area I visited, there were fourteen cinemas, but no music-halls or theatres. The mission-halls stand there still: gaunt and cheerless as the drab streets in which they are built, bearing witness to the part they once played in the social life of the district and to the evangelising spirit of the nineteenth century, as well as to its architectural poverty. To-day these missions find it more and more difficult to attract young people, unless they are prepared to include, in their scheme of things, the cinema—the new factor in the leisure hour of youth.

I visited one mission. This mission had battled for years for its version of the good life. It found its hold beginning to slip. An enterprising minister began to use films as part of the mission's work and at once its fallen fortunes were restored.

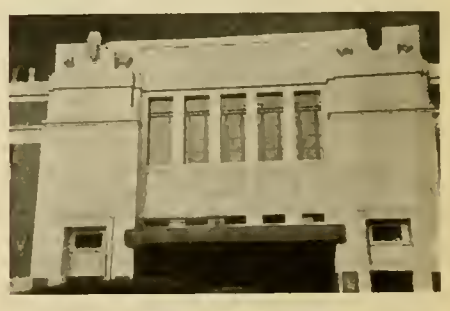
The mission runs three shows a week. A Saturday afternoon show for children, admission one penny. The programmes for the children's shows consists mainly of Westerns and comedies, the children disliking dramas and love-stories. On Saturday evenings there is a performance for adults, admission prices being threepence and sixpence. For Saturday night audiences prefer action pictures, Westerns being popular with the grown-ups too. Educational and travel pictures have been tried but it was found that the audiences did not care very much for them.

On Saturday evenings the mission runs a second religious service at which a film is shown The secretary of the mission explained the difficulty of getting the right kind of film for these services.

"Religious bodies are making films," he said, "but they are only just beginning and the films are hardly good enough yet. Films made by commercial companies, however excellent they may be as entertainment, are not usually suited to the Sunday evening service."

Actually, a glance over the bookings for the last year shows that the mission depends almost entirely upon entertainment films made by commercial companies. The list included such films as *British Agent*, *Temptotion*, *Stranger in Town*, *My Heart is Calling*, *Dinkie*, *The Blue Street*, and *Reunion*. Non-fiction films are, apparently, not liked by this audience either, though one, *Cavalcade of the Movies* was very well received.

From the mission, I went round the various cinemas in the immediate neighbourhood. All, save one, were either built many years ago, as cinemas, or converted music-halls and quite unsuited for the growing cinema audience and for proper screening and sound transmission. New cinemas are badly needed here.



The New People's Palace, Mile End Road

EAST LONDON:

Storm Centre of London Politics; melee of Races, Religions, Industries and Trades; half-a-million people packed around London's Dock-side:—

Investigation reveals action pictures and musicals to be most popular.

by RICHARD CARR

"East End audiences," said one manager to me, "are very critical indeed. They like good pictures, good American pictures, pictures of movement and action. They won't stand British pictures here at any price. When we have one in the programme, many of our patrons come in late or early to avoid seeing the British picture. Any good adventure, or gangster film will pack the house, though often a poor British film as second feature will affect the takings considerably.

"Comedies? Yes, they like comedies. The Marx Brothers are well received here but some of the older comedians such as Harold Lloyd are nowadays not such a draw.

"About fifty per cent. of our audience is Jewish, but I find very little difference in taste between the young Jewish people and others.

"How do I know what they like and what they don't? I have a job not to know. If the regular patrons don't like a film they make a point of telling me afterwards. They say 'B——y awful film that,' or some such remark.

"Or else they clap their hands during the film, or shuffle their feet and whistle. They certainly let me know whether or not they like the films we show."

Manager number two had an even healthier respect for his customers.

"Audiences down here are better judges of films than in any district I have yet worked in. They know what they like and they are certainly not backward in telling us when a picture is good or bad. They like pictures with fast, good dialogue, strong acting and plenty of movement. Costume pictures are not popular, and very few of my patrons have a good word to say for British films. British pictures are disliked because the acting is wooden, because the actors and actresses talk 'society fashion,' and because they are too slow.

"Often our patrons come in late rather than see a picture they have heard is not up to standard." Another cinema I visited was small but smartly lit outside, at which only one feature film is shown together with shorts to make up a two-hour programme. No newsreel is shown. A good idea, this, and one that seems to be popular. The cinema is open from twelve to twelve and admission is fourpence to any seat in the theatre, in the afternoon, and sixpence to any seat, in the evening. People come here to see films they missed when generally released or to see again films they particularly enjoyed. One British film that did good business here was *Jew Süss* mainly because of its Jewish interest. In fact, it seems that any film with Jewish interest will draw large crowds to this cinema, for a recent revival of the eight year old *Jazz Singer* drew record crowds.

Shorts of the serious kind are not popular here either. Travel films have been clapped off. The favourites are Laurel and Hardy and Popeye the Sailorman.

Then to East London's one and only super-cinema, a modern building contrasting strikingly with the dingy streets around. The comparison between its luxurious comfort and spaciousness and the housing conditions in surrounding streets appears to make the audience less critical of the films shown. In fact, it would probably be true to say that many of the very poor womenfolk come to this cinema in the afternoon as much for the warmth and comfort and the escape from crowded homes as for the films shown. Stage shows also attract audiences whatever the pictures may be, so I got less information on East End film preferences here than at any cinema I visited.

The best days for business are Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Friday is not in this district a good day for cinemas, possibly because Saturday is the Jewish holiday.

From the cinema managers, attendants, and ushers, from ordinary people talked to, I got some idea of the films that East London audiences enjoyed most during the last year. *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *Follow the Fleet*, *Top Hat*, *These Three*, *Fury*, *The Broadway Melody of* 1936, and, above all, *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Good action pictures and good musicals seem to top the list in every cinema I visited.

It is difficult to assess the difference, if any, between Jewish and English tastes; most cinema managers seem to think that there was no difference at all, unless as was suggested, Jewish people are slightly more sophisticated.

My last call was at the People's Palace, once the great show and cultural centre of the East End. Closed down many years ago it is now about to re-open under very different conditions and significantly enough, proposes to include in its extensive programmes of lectures, plays, orchestral and band concerts, showings of educational films. Whether it will find a support for this type of film is difficult to say, but the experiment is being tried and it may well have some influence on the tastes of East End audiences.

In the meantime, the younger people will go on supporting the best entertainment films that the industry can give them.

(Pictures by Courtesy of the G.P.O. Film Unit)

Twentieth-Century Fox have scheduled for production, 'The Siege of the Alcazar,' based on an incident in the Spanish Civil War. In an open letter, Ivor Montagu draws the attention of Producer Darryl F. Zanuck to dangers of one-sided treatment.

The Siege of the Alcazar

DEAR MR. ZANUCK,

You are one of the most enterprising of the producers in the States to-day, and so I am not at all surprised to read that you are preparing for immediate production a film on the siege of the Alcazar. Its heroism has thrilled the world, you are reported as saying.

I also read that you are asking newspapermen and others who have been on the spot to collect you facts and photographs. You want it to be as authentic as possible.

Very conscientious. Just what I would expect of a man of your enterprise, and it is because I think this desire for authenticity so laudable, I am hastening to help you.

You see, I happen to have seen and spoken with quite a number of persons who were there, and I feel sure that there are a whole number of things about the siege that a man of your conscience would like to know about. It would be a pity if they got missed out.

First of all, you are quite right about the siege itself being unprecedented. I don't think there's ever been anything quite like it in history before. And it was very heroic. But I wonder if you've heard who the heroes were.

A hero, I believe, is a man who fights against odds. It would be right to use the word hero for the people, the ordinary men-in-the-street, who, with empty hands and in the first flush of their surprise and indignation, overcame the generals and their machine-guns in Madrid and Barcelona. Bare-handed they overcame them, the oath-breakers, in their barracks.

But in Toledo, the generals and their cadets had no ordinary barracks. They had a fortification that had withstood the armies of centuries, and held stores and arms for all the province. Few men they had, but for every man was more than one machine-gun.

If they were so armed, why did they run into their fortress? Liberators, national patriots, surely with such an abundance of stores, they could have armed the populace that welcomed them and marched victoriously forward.

Curiously enough, the population didn't welcome them, however, and for all their arms, for all their military training, they feared beyond their walls to meet the fate that met their foresworn colleagues in Barcelona and Madrid. Not one echo of sympathy did they meet among the good folk of Toledo, whom as one man, set about the investment of their citadel.

The cadets were few, their besiegers many, fit material for an heroic tale. You guessed it! The tale of traitors, armed to the teeth and with ample stores, cowering behind walls fourteen feet thick. While the man-in-the-street, a peaceable bloke like you and me, took off his coat and, in shirt sleeves and armed with a fowling piece, set about their punishment.

Just think of it! Walls fourteen feet thick with machine-guns through every loophole and on the other side, shot-guns and blunderbusses taken from old trophies off the walls. I can find you plenty of eye-witnesses. One old artilleryman, an English veteran of the Great War, when the besiegers after the first months or so managed to get hold of an old few-pounder, wept to see it fire. A bang, a puff of smoke high on the castle wall, and as the puff clears away a brown smudge on the unruffled brickwork. That would be a nice shot for your picture, Mr. Zanuck, only I'm afraid the critics might think it just a fake, they wouldn't think it was really war. I can find you plenty of people who saw it, however. Why it was, and how it was, that an unarmed people was denied the possibility of arming to defend itself against a rebel army, I don't suppose anybody can tell you, and anyway it won't come in your picture probably.

Now what do soldiers who are going to be cut off for a long time want with them? Think, Mr. Zanuck. Not ammunition, they had plenty. Not food, when they prepared they had also seen to that. Something else, Mr. Zanuck. They took their womenfolk, some of them—we have heard a great deal of the women and children of the Alcazar—*but it was not only their own womenfolk they took*.

If by any chance when you are getting ready your film, Mr. Zanuck, you should meet one of the rescued women of the Alcazar, and as you are very conscientious it's quite likely you may arrange to see one during your preparations, ask her what happened to those *other* women. Ask her. Please, Mr. Zanuck. Because to this day no one has heard.

On that afternoon of rebellion, the cadets, hurrying to the shelter of the citadel of the Cid, paused in their flight to snatch these women. Shall we call them 'hostages'? It was a holiday afternoon, and in the sunshine couples sat spooning. Others strolled along the lanes that ran by the hill on which the fortress stands. Sometimes the boy was knocked senseless. Sometimes, perhaps because he did something idly (shall we call it heroic, Mr. Zanuck?) he would be shot or stabbed with the bayonet.

A car, in which a boy and girl had been driving near the fatal place that day, lay in the street for weeks throughout the siege. The boy's body for

At the Front *(Photos—Cotolan Government)*

Type of Militiaman (Photo: Catalan Govt.)

days slumped over the wheel. Then the besiegers went out and got it under a hail of machine-gun fire.

That might make another good shot. And as a scenarist myself, I don't think it makes a bad set-up in general. There they are, the fathers and the brothers, who till now have spent their lives behind their desks and counters. Some have guns, perhaps, and others—yes, I can find you people who have seen it—have only sticks, but all of them, hatred in their hearts, crouch peering from chairs and tables piled in the street, at those walls of fourteen feet of stone and brick that hide from them those whom perhaps they fear ever to see again. Will you come into their headquarters, a chemist's shop round the corner, and see the militia officer (terrible name, isn't it, almost Red, but he was the chemist himself before the patriot heroes took him from his filling of prescriptions). There on the wall behind his head, you will see the portraits of girls, last available family photographs on outings and the like, with beneath them a description and the circumstances of their capture. "Try to look out for those and save them when the citadel falls," is the legend on the wall.

Eye-witnesses? Well, you won't learn all that happened behind those walls and I don't think you need worry. Mr. Quigley wouldn't let you show it if you did find out. But you've always got your happy ending. Not perhaps the conventional happy ending, which is no doubt what makes the subject appeal to so daring and innovating a mind as yours. I suppose the usual film ending would show merit rewarded and injured virtue recovered, but as all the world knows, it hasn't worked out like that. Not yet at least. When those cowering heroes saw their bastions falling, when even those giant walls crumbled beneath simple miner's dynamite and the bare hands of the wronged populace, when these heroes at last felt vengeance at their throats, then these who in all Spain could find no Spaniard to lift a hand for them were rescued by mercenaries, by Moors, by the riffraff of the Foreign Legion, by Nazis fresh from the massacres of June 30th, and Italians fresh from their mustard gas victory over the Red Cross. But this isn't a happy ending at all, you may protest. Oh yes, it is. The thoughtless girls of that holiday afternoon may, it is true, be missing when you're seeking for the facts. *But their families do not mourn them now.* Why? Ask your own newspaper. Ask Jay Allen. Ask those who stepped gingerly in the streets of Toledo lest their nice American shoes were soiled with blood. Ask those who saw the Moors celebrate the release of their Alcazar 'heroes' by tossing hand grenades up and down the hospital wards before they set the hospital afire.

You must have that in. No one will be sad in the audience, when they know there's no one left now to worry about the sad things in the picture, will they?

So you see what a fine picture you can make. I congratulate you once again on deciding to make it authentic. Not many film producers would have the courage.

By the way, if by any chance report should be mistaken, and you are thinking of telling not a true story, but a fairy version of this tale—then Mr. Zanuck, let me whisper just this little warning in your ear: there are men and women and children in every corner of the world, Mr. Zanuck, who will remember it, Mr. Zanuck, as long as they remember the real heroes of the Alcazar.

And one day, Mr. Zanuck, you might come to regret it yourself.

But then you wouldn't do such a thing, would you?

But now there's another thing it would be a pity to leave out. It happened before the siege started, but we who make films know that before the big scene starts you have to get a personal story built up, to make the audience interested in what might otherwise leave it indifferent. Well, I think this is just the personal bit you need. It gives us the motive, too. It explains why the good burghers of Toledo, the clerks and the shopkeepers and the handicraftmen took off their coats and picked up their shotguns with such a will. It wasn't just abstract indignation at treachery. No, it was a motive much more like the traditional one that has sent many an American father or brother or sweetheart reaching for his shotgun since long before films began. Let me explain.

All this bloodshed and what-not in Spain, the revolt of the army began. I know a lot of people say the government wasn't governing very strongly, people were being shot from time to time, which, according to the people who say it, was a reason for the generals, instead of helping the government to govern, to set about shooting a lot more. Well, they may have been right, we won't discuss that here. What we do know, and they and their friends have said it a hundred times themselves, is that they began. This means (mind you put it in your film) that that afternoon when it started the good people of Toledo didn't suddenly get excited and drive the cadets into their fortress. The cadets, *knowing that what they were about to do would meet the unanimous indignation of the people*, withdrew into their barracks. And they withdrew into it, *knowing they would be cut off for a long time.*

Yours sincerely,

Ivor Montagu

The Alcazar

DIGEST OF VIEWS :—

Somerset Maugham

Thirty years ago in literary circles God was all the fashion. It was good form to believe and journalists used Him to adorn a phrase or balance a sentence; then God went out (oddly enough with cricket and beer) and Pan came in. In a hundred novels his cloven hoof left its imprint on the sward; poets saw him lurking in the twilight on London commons, and literary ladies in Surrey, nymphs of an industrial age, mysteriously surrendered their virginity to his rough embrace. Spiritually they were never the same again. But Pan went out and now beauty has taken his place. People find it in a phrase, or a turbot, a dog, a day, a picture, an action, a dress. Young women in Cohorts, each of whom has written so promising and competent a novel, prattle of it in every manner from allusive to arch, from intense to charming; and the young men, more or less recently down from Oxford, but still trailing its clouds of glory, who tell us in the weekly papers what we should think of art, life, and the universe, fling the word with a pretty negligence about their close-packed pages. It is sadly frayed, Gosh, they have worked it hard! The ideal has many names and beauty is but one of them. I wonder if this clamour is anything more than the cry of distress of those who cannot make themselves at home in our heroic world of machines, and I wonder if their passion for beauty, the Little Nell of this shamefaced day, is anything more than sentimentality.

Cakes and Ale

Richard Ross

In the past two or three years, Laughton, in my opinion, has been relying for his effects on two or three physical "gags."

One is the frenzied eye-rolling. It expresses intense emotion. But what kind of emotion? Laughton doesn't tell you, though the context may. All he says is "Look at me. I'm very het up about something."

If you know what that something is, the chances are you'll say: "My, what acting!" If you don't know what it is, you may say anything you like.

Then there's the unorthodox punctuation touch. Listen to Laughton declaiming the Biblical excerpts in *Rembrandt*. He breaks off a sentence in the middle, starts up again, runs right over the full stop and pulls up with a jerk plumb in the centre of the next sentence. Laughton beats more red lights than any other actor I know.

It's a flashy bit of business. It's creative, because it presents you with an entirely new bit of prose. It's refreshing, because it avoids the schoolboy-recitation effect of badly delivered dialogue. But it's still cheating.

Add to this the "looking over the other man's shoulder" game, which means that Laughton's eyes are fixed on some distant horizon while the other actor in the scene just talks to himself; and the habit, akin to ignoring punctuation marks, of alternately shouting and whispering and in any case talking in a very urgent voice that matches the rolling eyeballs and, like them, doesn't always mean a lot.

Film Weekly

Aldous Huxley

One of the main functions of all popular fiction, drama and now the cinema has been to provide people with the means of assuaging, vicariously and in fancy, their unsatisfied longings, with the psychological equivalents of stimulants and narcotics. The power of such literature to impose upon those whom we may call its addicts a kind of drugged acceptance of even the most sordid realities is probably very considerable. In real life, one Englishman out of every sixty thousand is a peer, one out of every three hundred thousand has an income of a hundred thousand pounds a year. A census of fictional characters has never, so far as I know, been made; but I should guess that one out of a hundred, perhaps even one out of fifty, was either a lord, or a millionaire, or both at once.

The presence of so many aristocrats and plutocrats in our literature has two causes. The first is that the rich and powerful enjoy more liberty than the poor and so are in a position to make their own tragedies, not merely to have disaster forced upon them from outside. There can be no drama without personal choice; and, proverbially, beggars cannot be choosers. Only people with incomes can afford to do much choosing in this world. "Their rich and noble souls" (to quote one of Butler's Erewhonian authors) "can defy all material impediment; whereas the souls of the poor are clogged and hampered by matter, which sticks fast about them as treacle to the wings of a fly. . . . This is the secret of the homage which we see rich men receive from those who are poorer than themselves."

Of the homage, too, that they receive from authors. The rich, the powerful and the talented are freer than ordinary folk and are therefore the predestined subjects of imaginative literature. The other reason why literature is so lavish with wealth and titles is to be sought in the very fact that the real world is so niggardly of these things. Authors themselves and their readers desire imaginary compensations for their poverty and social insignificance. In the lordly and gilded world of literature they get it. Nor are poverty and powerlessness their only troubles; it is more than likely that they are also plain, have an insufficient and/or unromantic sex life; are married and wish they weren't or unmarried and wish they were; are too old or too young; in a word, are themselves and not somebody else. Hence those Don Juans, those melting beauties, those innocent young kittens, those beautifully brutal boys, those luscious adventuresses. Hence Hollywood, hence the beauty chorus. When I was last at Margate a gigantic new movie palace had just been opened there. Its name implied a whole social programme, a complete theory of art; it was called "Dream Land." At the present time the cinema acts far more effectively as the opium of the people than does religion.

The Spectator

T. S. Eliot

There are, of course, all sorts of beautiful effects that the film can get and that are impossible to the stage: such as the negroes paddling their war canoes in *Sanders of the River*. But I am concerned with something more fundamental. The cinema gives an illusion not of the stage but of life itself. When we see a great music-hall comedian on the stage, such as George Robey or Ernie Lotinga, we feel that he is conscious of his audience, that a great deal of the effect depends upon a sympathy set up between actor and audience, and we like to feel that some of his gags are spontaneous and were not thought of the night before. But when we see Laurel and Hardy, it is not Laurel and Hardy acting for *us*, it is Laurel and Hardy in another mess. The film is the vehicle of illusion, and it makes all the illusion of the stage seem crude. Then, again, while it is likely that voice reproduction will be further improved by science, I think that the spoken word will always be secondary in the film: in the best films to-day the voice is used sparingly, and interspersed with significant noises and even music. And, finally, there is no illusion of scenery on the stage that the worst-equipped film studio cannot improve upon.

So you see that it is reasonable that the stage should not attempt to compete with the film in illusion of scenery, and surprising realism of event. It should turn to the voice, to movement which is meant to be seen from several angles, and to the things which can be done by the actor himself and which cannot be done by his pictures. And all this points to the verse play.

Now you will not get the most out of poetic drama of *any* period if you think of it merely as a play in verse. You should not think of verse as something *added* to a play, which gives it the rank of 'literature'. I dare say that some verse plays have been written under this misunderstanding, and that is one reason why some verse plays are bad. A true verse play is not a play translated into verse, it is conceived and carried out in terms of verse. To work out a play in verse is to be working like a musician as well as like a prose dramatist: it is to see the thing as a whole musical pattern. And this is an entirely different thing from a play set to music. It is not like opera, but some musical form like the sonata or fugue. The verse dramatist must operate on you on two levels at once, dramatically, with the characters and plot. The requirements for a good plot are just as severe as for a prose play: in the one case as the other the essential thing is never to lose the audience's attention but to keep it always excited about what is going to happen next. It is fatal for a poet trying to write a play, to hope to make up for defects in the movement of the play by bursts of poetry which do not help the action. But under-

Cinema, Radio, Television, Theatre

T. S. Eliot (cont.)

neath the action, which should be perfectly intelligible, there should be a musical pattern which intensifies our excitement by reinforcing it with feeling from a deeper and less articulate level. Everybody knows that there are things that can be said in music that cannot be said in speech. And there are things that can be said in poetic drama that cannot be said in either music or ordinary speech.

The use of the chorus in the full sense has hitherto been foreign to English drama, except of course in a few plays, such as Swinburne's 'Atalanta in Calydon', which imitate the Greeks, though the essential function of the chorus, its place as a more or less detached observer or a commenter upon the action of the play, is performed by individual characters in some of Shakespeare's plays—for example, Feste the Clown in 'Twelfth Night', to whom it is given to end the play by singing a song to the audience. The chorus has an intermediate position between the characters of the play and their plot and the audience. It may be nearer to the audience, and so simply a commentator; or it may be nearer to the action of the play, and so taking part in it. For instance, in one of W. H. Auden's plays, 'The Dog Beneath the Skin', the chorus is almost an interlude addressing the audience. In his more recent play, 'Ascent of F.6', the chorus are two characters who are watching the play and are interested in it.

In my own 'Murder in the Cathedral' the chorus is still more concerned with the action of the play. But the function of the chorus depends on the intention and design of that particular play. In writing the words for a chorus one finds that the larger it is the simpler their words have to be.

But I have not time to say more about the special problem of the chorus. I only want to say that in making use of it we do not aim to *copy* Greek drama. There is a good deal about the Greek theatre that we do not know, and never shall know. But we know that some of its conventions cannot be ours. The characters frequently talk too long; the chorus has too much to say and holds up the action; usually not enough happens; and the Greek notion of climax is not ours. But the chorus has always fundamentally the same uses. It mediates between the action and the audience; it intensifies the action by projecting its emotional consequences, so that we as the audience see it doubly, by seeing its effect on other people. And it has the great advantage of being conveyed more fully in verse than in prose, and of supporting something of which I spoke at the beginning, the *musical pattern*, as well as the dramatic pattern, of the play.

The Listener

Hilda Matheson

One reason, I suppose, why the B.B.C. have been able to follow an increasingly apologetic policy in regard to poetry is that there is no commercial, professional, or organised vested interest behind it. Music, about which the English have less reason to boast than about their poetry, commands the support of academies, professional musicians, the interests of theatre, opera, music publishers, and the entertainment industry. Poetry is too individual and intimate an art for organised expression. Yet those who understand and believe in its necessity might perhaps be more courageous than they have shown themselves in voicing their beliefs, and more ready to study the special conditions and possibilities of broadcasting. And the B.B.C. might consider whether they could not, in their own interests, enlist the active help of poets in developing a medium in which the spoken word is one of the two chief actors. Poetry requires performance no less than music, and there seems no reason why distinguished poets should not plan and present programmes as successfully as distinguished musicians have planned recitals of music.

The Observer

St. John Ervine

There are sixteen cinemas in Cardiff, and by the time this article is published, a new "super-of-super cinema" will have been opened. Why, by the way, does not someone teach cinema people the English language? What sort of cinema is a super-of-super cinema? We shall presently have some illiterate film person telling us that his pictures are the most perfect and the most best and the super-greatest pictures in the world—better, on doubt, than the best. Might not a collection be taken up at every cinema door to send cinema people to night schools?

The Observer

Philip Guedalla

I am, by Act of Parliament, the British public. I am the fellow you have to get 8*s.* 6*d.* out of, by telling him that the six shilling seats are full up. I do not need to be told by four just men and one statutory woman what is a good picture and what is a bad picture. There is only one test of that—a machine that sits in front of a young lady in a glass box.

I am by trade a writer of books. A book that no one wants to read is a bad book; a picture that no one wants to see is a bad picture.

C.E.A. (London Branch) Banquet

The Spectator

Within ten years we may expect to find as many people enjoying television as now enjoy the radio.

The Times has already told us of some of the delights in store for us. "The healthiest curiosity . . . will demand to see as much as possible of the real world, not of artificially composed entertainment." "The Coronation procession will obviously give a great opportunity to satisfy an eager public." "How delightful to watch Hammond bat and Larwood bowl, Perry play tennis and Padgham play golf." Such is the real world. Shall we also see rebellions in Spain, misery in the depressed areas, concentration camps in Germany, the Scottsboro' boys being tried in the United States? It may be questioned. *The Times*' forecast of what will be good for us to see is no doubt entirely accurate. Yet one pleasure we can confidently add to *The Times*' list. Sir Thomas Inskip recently attributed the rise of modern dictatorships with some justice to the discovery of the microphone. It is perhaps a convenient way of taking the guilt from men and attributing it to objects; but even if it is not wholly true we need not deny the immense assistance which direct access to the ear of every citizen has given to demagogues in their ascent to power. They certainly will not miss the opportunities provided by television. Signor Mussolini's speeches are broadcast to the entire world; there are few moments in Germany or Italy when some speech of Mussolini, Hitler, Goering, Goebbels is not being radiated. Soon now, wherever we are, to the music of their voices will be added the charm of their presence.

Reflection on such prospects, or others of which we have been warned, is sobering. In his *Modern Times* Mr. Chaplin has given us a terrifying illustration of the possible uses of television—the face of the foreman suddenly projected on a screen and raising a menacing finger at the workman who has stayed too long in the washroom. Is it, then, only the King, the athlete, the dictator, the boss, or other figures well known to us now on the newsreel—the wife of the Cabinet Minister breaking a bottle of champagne on a battleship, the inspector of guards of honour, the politician making an election address, the Dionne quintuplets—whom we shall be allowed to see? If that is all we are shown, television will be, not an addition to our faculties, but merely a means of emphasising disproportionately certain aspects of life.

This forecast is indeed depressing, and it may be hoped it is false. For in spite of pessimism it is not possible to regret this latest of the gifts of applied science. Perhaps we may even become more hopeful by considering the development of the wireless by the B.B.C., which is now in control of television. It may be urged that many of the possibilities of wireless have not been exploited; that as an instrument of education it has been used by us with far less success than by the dictators as an instrument of propaganda ; that, except in music, it has contributed little to the development or appreciation of the arts; that it is apt to sacrifice what is best to what is merely innocuous, genteel, and soothing. . . .

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A Visit to the National Picture House

By our Film Technician

Our resident film technician takes a look at the National Gallery and finds there that colour has reached an advanced state of development comparable to that of the latest four-colour processes.

". . . one spot-light of inadequate wattage."

I THINK YOUR readers may like to know that I recently dropped in at the National Picture House, Trafalgar Square, where a permanent programme of pre-movie productions is offered (this institution should not be confused with its more important neighbour the National Film Library).

I found to my surprise that colour had already arrived, and even reached a state of artistic development comparable with that of the latest four-colour processes, before the earliest picture in the collection was produced. Not so stereoscopy. A courteous attendant informed me that it was 'just round the corner,' but having occasion shortly afterwards to withdraw in the direction he had indicated, it suddenly occurred to me that he may have misheard my query. Colour, however, was often severely limited by deficient equipment. Rembrandt Studios, for example, clearly possessed in the final days of their financial embarrassment no lighting equipment at all except one spotlight of inadequate wattage. This led to a disagreeable brownish tinge in their productions. The camera-work throughout was, as might be expected, somewhat naïve. The use of dramatic camera-angles was briefly attempted in the late seventeenth century but soon abandoned. The use of colour-filters for enhancing cloud effects was, however, well understood, and the clouds which fill in the backgrounds of portraits of eighteenth-century big-wigs compare favourably with even the woolliest firmament of a modern documentary.

The censorship had not, in those days, developed the lucid principles which now guide its decisions.

The walls are a mass of controversial subject-matter, religious subject-matter, and scenes of cruelty. No objection seems to have been raised, even to such blatant examples of Peace Propaganda as Rubens' 'Peace putting the Horrors of War to flight,' Nor was any attempt made to classify pictures as A or U at the time of their release.

In short, a visit to the National brings home to one in conclusive fashion the changes which have taken place in the Picture Production Industry during the last quarter of a century. The student of Archaeology, Ethnology, Hagiology, and even of Art will find much to interest him here.

Moreover, once accustomed to the unfamiliar idea of keeping moving himself, while the pictures stay still, he will begin to feel a certain soothing sensation, which may almost amount to pleasure, in the contemplation of these first steps of mankind towards Pictorial Perfection. Admission is free, except on Duping Days.

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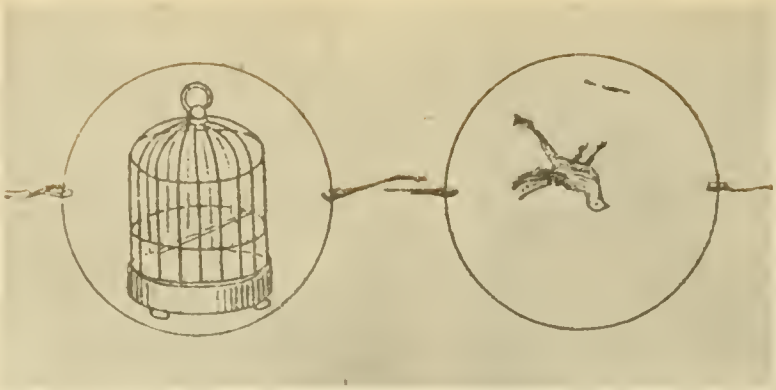

Fig. 1 The Traumatrope

HOW THE MOVIES BEGAN TO MOVE

Cinematic inventions pre-dated the invention of film by hundreds of years.

by

MARIE SETON

LONG before the invention of photography the idea of entertainment through the medium of reproduced movement had caught the imagination of scientists. This, the basic principle of cinema was under consideration hundreds of years before the existence of Lumière's, French pioneer of cinematography, whose miraculous device showed a train actually entering a station, a wall falling and a cavalry charge. These miracles came to pass in 1896.

The study of movement and subsequent experiments in reproducing it originated in the first studies made in optics and the phenomenon of light. These questions occupied the thoughts of the magician-scientists of the ancient world; while their experiments played a considerable part in the external aspect of the religious mysteries enacted throughout the history of Egypt, and also at Eleusis. The Arab philosopher-astronomer, Al-Hazen, wrote a tract on the elements of optics in the 12th century; Roger Bacon, a member of the Franciscan order was experimenting early in the 13th century at Ilchester; while Leonardo da Vinci included it in his other scientific researches during the second half of the 15th century.

Research into optics and the allied problem of light led to the invention of various machines of the magic lantern class, different mechanical devices for producing curious effects such as the Black Chamber of Jean-Baptiste Della Porta 1540–1615), and the extraordinary séances which Robertson held in Paris during the 18th century. Very often these and other experiments were used to make the public believe all manner of incredible things—skeletons, devils and apparitions being the chief characters in these exhibitions.

After 1824 numbers of optical games which had to be worked by hand were put on the market. Their names which are legion changed yearly and generally ended in the syllable trope or cope. The first was Traumatrope of Dr. Paris (Fig. 1). It was followed between 1829 and 1833 by the Phenakisticope, the invention of a Belgian doctor called Plateau (Fig. 2). Here the white disc on which the design is painted has to be spun while one watches the design through the slits in the black disc. Many of the designs on these discs which are easily changed are highly sytlized, and when in motion give an impression not unlike the abstract work of Len Lye and Otto Fischinger. There were many variations of this game. In 1838 an American, Dr. Horner, invented a slightly different rotating cylindrical Phenakisticope which he called the Daedleum. This was not patented until 1860, and when it did appear, it was under the name of the Zoëtrope, popularly known as the Wheel of Life (Fig. 3). The strip paintings used in these cylinders are usually of a grotesque character, and are drawn in the style of coloured cartoons. Figures 4 to 7 show how the movement develops. They are the drawings on a Zoëtrope strip belonging to an 1870 model now in the possession of Andrew Block. Mr. Block also has an amusing curiosity in the shape of a tiny Easter egg containing a miniature Wheel of Life, complete with several strips decorated with minute silhouette figures. The best collection of these forerunners of the cinema was made by the late Mr. Will Day, and is now in the Science Museum at South Kensington.

Meanwhile two other lines of research had been progressing for many years—the study of movement in men and in animals; and the possibility of photography. The studies of the alchemists in the 16th century led them to endeavour to reproduce an image on paper through the agency of light and varied chemical solutions. These experiments continued, first in one country then in another, for nearly three hundred years until photography was ultimately discovered in 1829 by two Frenchmen, Niepce and Daguerre. It was put on a commercial basis by Fox Talbot in England in 1841. The next important step was made in America when the

Fig. 4 Fig. 5 Fig. 6 Fig. 7

Hyatt brothers of New Jersey discovered celluloid in 1869. Sixteen years later, also in the United States, Eastman of Rochester began to manufacture it, making it available for cinematographic films twenty years after its discovery.

Side by side with the development of the technical and chemical processes involved in photography, were the studies being made by men to whom the analysis of the exact nature of movement was the important thing. In America Dr. Edward James Muybridge was making all kinds of experiments during the 1870's and 1880's with the animals from the Philadelphia Zoo. The physiologist, Dr. E. J. Marey, was analysing the flight of birds with the aid of a photographic gun in France. While in England, William Friese-Green, the photographer, and sometimes called the 'father of cinematography,' was getting very near to the discovery of real cinematography. Coinciding with the work of Friese-Green at the end of the eighties was the invention of Edison, the Kinetoscope. This was a sort of individual cinema for a single spectator—the pier peepshow.

It is also necessary to mention that in France a certain Leon Gaumont was taking a great interest in all the moving picture inventions. Also in France were the optical theatres of Emil Reynaud—in 1882, 1892 and 1896 they were: 'the theatre of the projected praxniscope,' 'the theatre with pantomimes of light,' and 'the theatre of animated painted photographs.'

Thus by divers routes the specialists and the public had become increasingly interested in moving pictures over a very long period of time. At last, on the 22nd of March, 1896, a short film invented by Auguste and Louis Lumière of Lyon was shown in Paris.

In forty years that invention ceased being the rival of slot-machines, peep-shows and darts, and became the fifth largest industry in the United States of America.

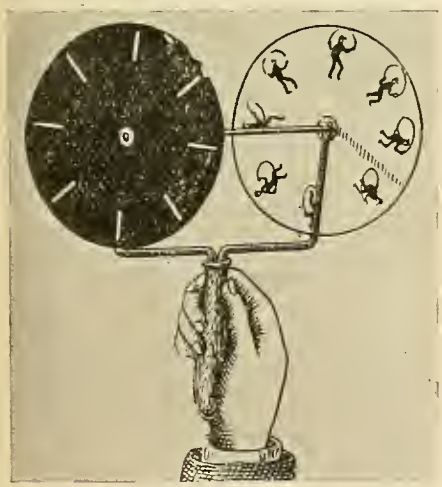

Fig. 2 *The Phenakisticope invented (between* 1829-1833) *by Plateau, a Belgian Doctor.*

Fig. 3 (*Right*). *The Zoëtrope, known as the Wheel of Life.*

"Blown out, baked out and broke"

Two Views on

"The Plow that Broke the Plains"

SCENARIO AND DIRECTION: PARE LORENTZ
PHOTOGRAPHY: RALPH STEINER AND PAUL STRAND
PRODUCTION: RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION, U.S.A.

This film is more than propaganda praising Roosevelt's arrest of the slump on the American wheatlands. From the first shots of cattle, feeding on a hillside in the clear sunlit air, dwarfed by the country's immensity so that they look like ants on a mound, this film is permeated with a sense of the richness and vastness of the Central Great Plains and of the tragedy of history's majestic march to the disaster of thousands. The war sets up a call for wheat. The bright, sharp plough poises on the grass where cattle fed, stabs, and the grass cascades behind it in a wave. In place of the cow-puncher on his horse watching from the hilltop, the wheat tractors drive in rows like tanks to the music of "Mademoiselle from Armentières." "More wheat! More wheat!" is the slogan. "Wheat will Win the War." The Central Great Plains are a sea of wheat and prices rise on the ticker. But even wars must end. The war music goes on, but it is in a minor key. Wheat may have won the war, but no one wants to win the peace. Men may starve, but there is no market for wheat. Where wheat illimitably waved is now a desert of dust. The printing machines spew forth pleas to take the farms at any price. But the cortège of flivvers from the homes buried by dust does not end, and men who did men's work now sit whittling sticks by the roadside, and beg for odd jobs. Roosevelt steps in with a policy of land conservation and State assistance. Although the policy still smacks of pandering to scarcity, the improvement seems real.

There is no doubt that this production, assisted by Thomson's music, and the rich, rhythmic commentary has caught the romance and tragedy of this great area. Why is it that only film reporting of this type seems to catch the romance of human enterprise and films purporting to be romances are soggy and dull? The best drama dealing with such a subject was Edward G. Robinson's *I Loved a Woman*. But a level of poetry is reached in this 20-minute piece of journalism that beats them all. H. A.

* * *

"High winds and sun. A country without rivers, and with little rain." This is the record of what fifty years have done to the four hundred million acres of prairie in the Middle West States of North America.

The first half of this film sells the so intelligent audience a richly deserved pup. In memory of Puerilia, cattle and cow-punchers pass in silhouette across a panchromatic sky. Oh! the grandeur of Man and Raw Nature! Pity the poor pioneer!

1914. The bombshell bursts and the boom begins. Tractors are intercut with tanks, bayonets with ploughshares. Land is to be had for the asking: "Buy land and let the Government farm it: purchase price returned on a year's crop." Hurrah for Capital and the Great War, who have created the Middle West! In the audience the Left wing gnaws its fingernails. regretting wasted documentary opportunities; and the Right purrs contentedly, watching wealth evolve in the way it understands. By 1923 all that green grass is touchstone-turned to golden wheat.

Grain is pouring from a thresher; on the Exchange a tape-machine ticks out the soaring prices; grain pours from the thresher; the tape ticks on, tugs at the ormolu machine, pulls it crashing to the floor. The tractors are idle and rusty, the wheat-fields unsown, the slump is on.

"High winds and sun. A country without rivers and with little rain." Over the struggling farms storm-clouds gather—and break not to water but to dust. Greed had stripped the grass from the prairies, and set cattle to graze on the stubble: there was nothing left to bind the soil against the wind. Nature formed the Sahara slowly: Man created the Great American Desert inside half a century. Now begins the Exodus of the farmers, "blown out, baked out and broke."

And so, left and right, the pup is held. The Middle West is devastated, depopulated. The Resettlement Administration steps in. It finds forty million acres beyond remedy, and two hundred million severely damaged. Roosevelt's scheme lends money to the farmers, encourages layout of farms. But more must be done, if the Middle West is to be saved. This film is not self-gratulatory, pleased at ingenious advertisement. It is an appeal to the American Nation: "The wind still blows, and the sun still bakes the land."

Throughout the United States the chain-cinemas rejected this film. D. A.

Secrets of British Film Finance

A FILM COUNCIL INVESTIGATION

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALL FACTS AND FIGURES IN THIS REPORT REFERRING TO COMPANY FINANCE REPRESENT THE POSITION AT THE END OF OCTOBER, 1936

ENGLAND is at the peak of a gold-rush in films. In the first ten months of 1936 loans of nearly thirteen million pounds were poured into the three great spheres of production, renting and exhibition. Banks, insurance companies, legal investment trusts, even motor manufacturers are falling over each other in their eagerness to stake a claim. Men and women who have scarcely given a thought to films all their lives are clamouring for posts in the studios, attracted by the rumour of high salaries and speedy promotion.

But if we take even a superficial glance at this apparent El Dorado we find some strange paradoxes. In spite of the torrent of money recently poured into them, few British production companies have paid any dividends for the last four years, which means that most have never paid any dividends at all. In spite of the rapid development in production and in studio construction, the Association of Cine Technicians must battle unceasingly to get employment for British technicians. In spite of the yearly-rising demands of the Quota Act for British footage, the overwhelming domination of the British market by American interests, though somewhat lessened, is by no means undermined.

The present meteoric expansion of the British film trade constitutes one of the most dangerous and highly speculative booms in the history of finance. At present it is passing its peak point. But before we can examine its causes and probable consequences we must go back to 1927 and follow the results of the passing of the all-important Cinematograph Films Act. From the passage of this Act the story of the British film industry virtually begins.

In brief, the Quota Act made it compulsory for renters and exhibitors operating in this country to offset a rising percentage of British-made films against films imported from abroad. Those failing to distribute and to show the prescribed quantities of British footage were made liable to heavy fines.

This innocent and well-intended piece of legislature immediately procured the desired effect, for it virtually created the production side of the British industry. But it also had the little foreseen effect of creating quantity at the expense of quality, for in operation it made the powerful American interests financially responsible for the desired stimulation of British production. And that responsibility the American interests naturally proceeded to discharge as cheaply as possible.

Before 1928 the London renters of the eight giant American companies were handling about nine-tenths of all the feature films shown in this country. But under the new Quota regulations these renters found themselves compelled to distribute, in addition to their own American product, a specified proportion of British-made films. Two companies, *Warner-First National* and *Fox*, set up production subsidiaries in England to fulfil their Quota obligations. The other six contracted with numerous British independent producers for the production of their Quota films, and contracted on tight terms. Thus it came about that even as late as 1935 50 per cent of the expanding British production industry found its activities largely dictated by the great American combines.

These combines exercised their power almost entirely through the renting side of the Trade. On the exhibition side most of them confined themselves to the control of a big pre-release theatre in London. *Paramount* alone embarked on a slow campaign for the acquisition of a small number of super-halls in the key cities.

Against the American groups stood only two major English companies, *Gaumont British Picture Corporation* and *Associated British Picture Corporation*. Through a series of amalgamations and acquisitions these companies steadily expanded their activities to cover all three spheres of production, renting and exhibition. But their real strength lay in their vertical organisation, based on the control of extensive cinema circuits; and it was on the acquisition of new cinemas that their chief expansion policy was founded. Apart from these two companies the English exhibition field was split into a number of small circuits and a considerable majority of singly-owned halls, content from the box-office viewpoint to accept the offerings of the American renters for their main programmes.

As year followed year the Quota percentage for British footage rose, and British production increased from about 16% of all feature films registered to nearly 30%. But the situation precipitated by the Act still remained. American finance, sparingly allocated, was still the basis of half the production work in the country. To fulfil their Quota the Americans demanded cheap films; and cheap films meant quick production. Hence the "Quota quickies," which, as they increased in number, became the bane of exhibitors all across the country. Forced by law to show them since the remaining British output was insufficient for their Quota needs, exhibitors complained more and more loudly against their bad quality.

Then in 1933, when the widespread agitation against the quickies was reaching its height, an event took place which was to change the whole attitude towards Quota production.

United Artists, one of the big American renters (who already had a renting arrangement with the English firm of *British & Dominion*) tried out a new plan. This company was basically different in structure from the other American renters. Instead of being charged with the distribution of the output of a given American production company, United Artists was a co-operative distributing organisation for the films of a small number of independent American "quality" producers. Why not, therefore, extend the organisation to include an English "quality" producer whose films could not only fulfil the United Artists' Quota obligations, but could also, if their standard were high enough, find a world market as well? In this way three birds could be killed with one stone: (1) Quota demands would be fulfilled; (2) exhibitors would get good films instead of quickies; (3) money would be taken both at home and abroad.

It happened that an English quality producer was available in ALEXANDER KORDA, whose earlier English films had shown considerable production polish. The fact that he was Hungarian was of no consequence since the Board of Trade could be satisfied by the employment of the proper proportion of English labour in production work. Before long *The Private Life of Henry VIII* was in circulation through United Artists.

TRAVEL at dusk on the Great Western main line from Paddington to Birmingham. Fifteen miles out of London a thick plantation of pine trees hides the view to the right of the line. Suddenly, through the pines glows a fierce purple light, like a giant oxy-acetylene welder. A moment later the trees have swept past to reveal a great mass of buildings, still white in the gathering darkness. Every window blazes with light, and little figures can be seen hurrying from room to room. In the dazzling purple glare there stand the skeletons of scaffolding and strange facades, while high up on a rostrum a tiny figure standing by a tripod waves its arm. A second afterwards the buildings of a small country station blot out the whole scene, and as the platform roars past you glimpse the name of the station —Denham.

At Elstree, Welwyn, Shepherd's Bush, Islington, Shepperton, Iver, a dozen other studios are in the same feverish rush of production. At the same time, all across the country, queues of people wait outside the new local super-cinema, while perhaps two streets away the steel girders of yet another half-finished 2,000-seater rise into the sky.

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The result was electrifying, since, contrary to the expectations of many, the policy succeeded. *Henry VIII* not only fulfilled its fundamental duty of providing Quota footage; according to a report in the *Motion Picture Herald* (given on Mr. Korda's authority) it grossed approximately $2,500,000.

The new situation gave food for the deepest thought in the more Anglican sections of Wardour Street. A method had been found whereby the Quota Act, which had hitherto brought discredit to British producers and distress to exhibitors, could be turned not only to the credit of all concerned, but what was far more important, to profitable financial account. Two essentials were necessary to the expansion of the scheme: a supply of quality producers of the calibre of Mr. Korda, and the necessary finance for their productions.

The first of these essentials was almost miraculously supplied by an influx during 1933 and 1934 of foreign producers, stars and technicians seeking employment in this country largely as a result of the dislocated condition of European production following the accession of Hitler. The second essential, the raising of production finance, we shall examine in some detail later on.

United Artists now proceeded to consolidate their position and to expand their Anglo-American alliance. During 1935–36 they continued their distribution arrangements with the expanding Korda enterprises and with British and Dominion, and made new arrangements with a host of small production companies now springing into existence as a result (*a*) of the new Quota policy, and (*b*) the increasing availability of quality producers. These companies included: *Atlantic Film Productions* (registered Nov. 1935), *Berguer-Czinner Productions*, *British Cine Alliance* (Aug. 1935), *Criterion Film Productions* (June 1935), *Erich Pommer Productions*, *Garrett-Klement Productions* (March 1935), *Pall Mall Productions* (March 1936), *Trafalgar Productions* (Jan. 1936), and *Victor Saville Productions* (April 1936).

During the past year alone United Artists increased their English production affiliations from 2 to 11, so that the number of English producers within the organisation actually exceeded that of American producers, though the control of the distributing machinery remains in American hands. It should further be noted that the company does not directly participate in the production finances of these enterprises.

At the same time United Artists began to strengthen their renting position by acquiring interests in the exhibition sphere. At present two U.A. directors appear on the board of the Entertainments and General Investment Corporation, which is the largest shareholder in *County Cinemas Ltd.*, a growing circuit of over 50 halls controlled by C. H. DONADA. Further, it is reported on the authority of OSCAR DEUTSCH that U.A. have acquired a large interest (believed to amount to 50%) in the rapidly expanding Odeon circuit.

It was not long before the first Anglo-American alliance was followed by a second. Early in 1936 the control of *Universal* passed out of the hands of its founder, Carl Laemmle, into those of a consortium, in which A. H. Giannini, San Francisco banker, and J. Cheever Cowdin, finance and aircraft magnate, represent the chief American interests. But on the new Universal board English interests are also strongly represented by JOSEPH ARTHUR RANK (of the Rank milling combine) and LESLIE WILLIAM FARROW (chartered accountant, and holder of some 24 chairmanships and directorships in English industrial concerns). Mr. Rank and Mr. Farrow are at the same time directors of an English film finance concern known as *General Cinema Finance Corporation*. In March of last year the G.C.F. Corporation took control of *General Film Distributors*, an important new renting organisation founded, with the support of the English interests already mentioned, by C. M. WOOLF after his resignation from Gaumont-British in May 1935. The English renting organisation of Universal was then merged with General Film Distributors. In this way any English quality films distributed by G.F.D. serve as Quota for the American Universal output, and at the same time may benefit by the international distributing facilities of the new joint concern.

Herbert Wilcox

C. M. Woolf

Max Schach

John Corfield

With the merger complete, the stage was set for another, and practically simultaneous programme of expansion. On the exhibition side G.F.D. are building up a circuit of their own chiefly by the acquisition of existing halls. On the production side certain members of the group are closely associated with Pinewood Studios, a four-floor plant at Iver, Bucks, which began work late last year.

And just as a host of production units clustered round the expanding United Artists organisation, so a galaxy of independent producers associated themselves with the growing G.F.D. concern. During 1936 G.F.D. distributed films made by *British National Films*, *British Pictorial Productions*, *Capitol Film Corporation*, *Cecil Film Productions*, *City Film Corporation*, *Grafton Films*, *Herbert Wilcox Productions*, and *J. G. & R. B. Wainwright Ltd.*

Thus we see the emergence of two powerful Anglo-American alliances. deriving their strength mainly from their renting and theatre-acquiring activities. By a policy of "Quota films for a world market" each has virtually created a satellite swarm of production units dependent upon the central organisations for the distribution of their output, but apparently mostly obtaining their finance from elsewhere. If we examine the registration data of production companies over the last five years, we find an annual increase as follows:—

Year	*Production companies registered*
1932	46
1933	64
1934	86
1935	108
1936 (10 months)	87

Moreover, in the film registration data we find that over the last two years the percentage of British quality films handled by the two Anglo-American renters and potentially seeking a world market has risen from 4.2% to 16.6%.

But let it not be thought that the two groups are separate to the extent of violent competition. Their cross-relationships are numerous and interesting. A. H. GIANNINI, one of the Universal voting trustees, is at the same time president and chairman of United Artists. In addition, several of the G.F.D. executives are on the board of British & Dominion, one of the United Artists producers. B. & D. have also a part interest in the new Pinewood Studios, which are closely linked to G.F.D. and used by several of the production units associated with the G.F.D. group. Through B. & D. also, both groups are in touch with Paramount since B. & D. produce the bulk of the Paramount Quota. There is a further possibility that the production units associated with the main groups will before long embrace at least one newcomer. A. H. Giannini is also a voting trustee of the American Columbia organisation. In August 1936, it was announced that Paul Soskin Productions, a new production unit with strong financial backing, had contracted for the production of eight features for Columbia at a total cost of £500,000. And the first Soskin feature was released through United Artists.

In the midst of these vast expansion programmes, what was taking place in the two big English groups which, till recently, were the sole major rivals of the American combines—Gaumont-British and A.B.P.C.? They had pursued a steady policy of expansion in the exhibition field, until at the end of 1935 they owned between them some 560 cinemas out of a total of about 4,400 in the country. A.B.P.C. had become largely a holding company controlling the A.B.C. circuit, the B.I.P. and Welwyn studios and the distributing organisations of Pathé Pictures and Wardour Films.

The interests of the Gaumont group were spreading beyond its own circuits and its studios at Shepherd's Bush into the formation of subsidiary companies including G.B.D. (distributing), G.B.E. (equipments), G.B.I. (educational production), and G.B. News. In addition, its interests spread to the Gainsborough Studios at Islington, British Acoustic Films, and more recently to Baird Television and other film and radio concerns.

In the summer of 1936 Fox and its close ally Loew made a spectacular bid for the virtual control of the Gaumont group. Had the negotiations gone through at the time a third Anglo-American alliance would have been made, this time of truly gigantic proportions, for Loew, in addition to owning large theatre properties in U.S.A., controls Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. But shortly afterwards the headlines of the national press splashed the news that John Maxwell, representing A.B.P.C., had done a lightning deal with Gaumont and allied the two great English groups. Some even suggested that Mr. Maxwell was now to become the big boss of the British movies.

The truth was somewhat different. The American move towards control of Gaumont was, indeed, countered by a closer relationship between G.B. and A.B.P.C. For this purpose 250,000 "B" (*non-voting*) shares in Metropolis and Bradford Trust (the holding company controlling G.B.) were bought from the Ostrer Brothers by Mr. Maxwell on behalf of A.B.P.C. But the 10,000 "A" (*voting*) shares remained under the control of Isidore Ostrer and the Twentieth-Century-Fox interests, the former retaining the majority with 5,100. Mr. Maxwell has claimed to hold an option on the purchase of the 5,100 voting shares held by Mr. Ostrer, but the Fox interests state that the articles of association of the company give them the right to veto this transfer. But since the A.B.P.C. interests cite another clause in the articles in their favour the outcome of the matter, if taken to law, would by no means be certain.

Moreover, it is of interest to note the price paid by A.B.P.C. for their 250,000 non-voting 8*s.* 3*d.* shares. According to the *Financial Times* of October 21st 1936, the price was £350,000 in cash and an allotment of 300,000 ordinary 5*s.* A.B.P.C. shares; that is, a total of some £618,125 at the market value of the latter at the time. The price for the 5,100 voting shares "to be acquired later" was understood to be in the neighbourhood of £800,000. Therefore, if the deal were completed, the Ostrer share would be approximately £1,418,000. Revalued in terms of the Gaumont shares controlled by the Ostrer holding in Metropolis and Bradford Trust, the total price would amount to £1 18*s.* 11*d.* per G.B. ordinary share, at a time when the market value of the latter was 16*s.* 9*d.*

It is evident that the world-market policy of the two rising Anglo-American groups caused considerable perplexity in Gaumont. This perplexity was reflected at the much-belated annual general meeting of the company on November 2nd 1936. At this meeting Mark Ostrer described the position of the company in detail. From his discussion of the accounts it appeared that the overdraft with the National Provincial Bank was £1,149,785 (an increase of £482,000 over the previous year), £247,904 of which might be taken as the approximate bank indebtedness in respect of film production. The company's efforts to produce and distribute for a world market were held mainly responsible for the heavy additional expenditure. The abandoning of this policy and the production of cheap films for the home market would, it was stated, automatically restore the profitability of the company's production activities. For the first time in the company's history the directors recommended the passing of the ordinary dividends with the object of placing £200,000 in a special reserve, in spite of the fact that the profits were stated to be £715,500. (The *Financial News*, however, pointed out that the satisfactory profit position was largely due to the fact that the period of accounts for one of the G.B. subsidiaries had been extended to 14 months, thus doubling its dividends.) In the absence of a consolidated balance sheet for the whole group it was impossible to understand the real financial position of the company. A number of shareholders made it abundantly clear to the directorate that they wished to see such a balance sheet, and the meeting was finally adjourned to allow of its preparation.

On December 17th Mr. Mark Ostrer moved, at the adjourned meeting, that the company's profit and loss account be adopted. An amendment was, however, put forward demanding that the accounts be not adopted and that a committee of shareholders be set up with power to investigate the books. Mr. Ostrer, apparently dissatisfied with the result of a hand vote demanded a poll, and stated that the result would be announced as soon as possible.

He further mentioned that those present represented 80,000 shares, while he held proxies for 127,000 shares, and that these were in addition to the shares held by the directors.

Let us now leave Mr. Ostrer with his expectant shareholders, and Mr. Maxwell with his 250,000 non-voting shares, and turn our attention to the important question of the finance behind the two big Anglo-American groups, United Artists and Universal-G.F.D.

It has been made clear that the basic structure of these groups takes the form of a central renting organisation associated for purposes of distribution with a cluster of production companies rapidly increasing in number, but in the majority of cases apparently not directly financed by the renting concerns. Yet it is certain that between January 16th and October 30th 1936, more than £4,100,000 was poured into British production, creating an unprecedented boom. Where did this torrent of wealth come from? Who authorised the pumping of it into an industry long regarded as one of the most speculative in the world? What was the purpose behind it?

We will begin with the United Artists group. United Artists itself need not long detain us. It is a private company controlled by its American parent concern, and nearly all its issued capital of £7,500 is held in the name of its chairman and manager, MURRAY SILVERSTONE. Of the production groups associated with it, the most important are the Korda companies concerned with the financing of London Film Productions and Denham Studios. This group consists of some ten companies, four of which were floated in 1935 with a capital of £10 each in £1 shares. The largest of the ten is *London Film Productions Ltd.*, formed in 1932 with an issued capital of £406,054. The board, with Mr. Korda as chairman, includes SIR CONNOP GUTHRIE, Bart., who is also a director of United Artists (and is besides interested in Raleigh Cycles and the Lincoln Wagon & Engine Co.), E. STEVINSON, a director of C. T. Bowring & Co. (Insurance) Ltd. (the insurance subsidiary of the old-established Bowring merchant and shipping group), and J. R. SUTRO, various members of whose family own blocks of shares in the company.

The largest individual shareholder is the *Prudential Assurance Co. Ltd.*, with 25,000 def. ord. and 250,000 pref. ord. Moreover, after previous loan transactions, the Prudential on October 12th, 1936, took up a new debenture issue (amount not specified), while two days later C. T. Bowring & Co. (Insurance) Ltd., took up a further debenture issue of £274,702. The other main shareholders are concealed behind a number of bankers' nominee companies.

Apart from the big insurance interests, the recent reorganisation of Denham Laboratories Ltd. possibly indicates another financial group interested in the Korda activities. For on the board of that company appear the names of S. G. WARBURG and D. OLIVER. S. G. Warburg is a partner of M. M. Warburg & Co., Hamburg, and of Warburg & Co., Amsterdam, the Continental bankers related through the Warburg family with the New York bankers Kuhn, Loeb & Co. D. Oliver is a director of Grundwert A.G., Hamburg.

There are two other studio-owning enterprises associated with United Artists; British & Dominions and Worton Hall Studios. The cross-references of the B. & D. Corporation with the Universal-G.F.D. group are perhaps stronger than their relations with United Artists, and it is therefore more convenient to examine it in conjunction with that group. Suffice it for the moment to say that none of the B. & D. shareholders control as much as 4% of its capital, while many are hidden behind bankers' nominee companies. Those identifiable include men whose other interests cover goldmines, "Punch," motor cars, chocolate, railways and canals. Worton Hall Studios was registered in January 1936, with A. S. CUNNINGHAM-REID, M.P., MARCEL HELLMAN, D. FAIRBANKS, JUNR., PAUL CZINNER and A. G. SMITH as directors. Dr. Czinner subsequently resigned.

We must now glance at nine non-studio-owning production units associated with the United Artists group for distribution purposes. *Atlantic Film Productions*, with a capital of £30,000, has charges of £58,750 outstanding in favour of Aldgate Trustees Ltd.; *Criterion Film Productions*, capital £10,000, has charges of £212,000 outstanding in favour of Aldgate Trustees Ltd., and Capt. Cunningham-Reid; *Trafalgar Productions*, capital £25,000, has charges of £450,000 (Aldgate Trustees) and a mortgage of £60,000 (Equity and Law Life Assurance Society); *Victor Saville Productions*, capital £10,000, has charges of £320,000 in favour of Denham Securities Ltd. Three more—*British Cine Alliance*, *Garrett-Klement Pictures* and *Pall Mall Productions*—have capitals of £25,000, £10,000 and £10,000 respectively, while the financial position of the remaining two—*Bergner-Czinner Productions* and *Erich Pommer Productions*—we were unable to trace.

It will be seen, however, that most of these companies have comparatively small capital resources, and that at least four of them have heavy debts outstanding, presumably in respect of their production costs. We will discuss the identity of their creditors at a later stage, in the meantime turning our attention to the second Anglo-American group, Universal-G.F.D.

It has been pointed out that the holding company controlling this group is the General Cinema Finance Corporation. In examining the directorate of this company we find ourselves face to face with some of the most successful figures in the world of English finance-capital. First: THE RT. HON. LORD PORTAL OF LAVERSTOKE, chairman of the great paper combine of Wiggins, Teape & Co. (1919) Ltd., and Wiggins, Teape & Alex. Pirie (Merchants) Ltd., and director of eight other concerns besides. Through his mother, a daughter of the Hon. St. Leger Glyn and granddaughter of the first Lord Wolverton, Lord Portal is also related to that famous banking family.* Second: JOSEPH ARTHUR RANK, D.L., J.P., who holds some 20 directorships in interests largely concerned with milling, wholesale newsagency and films. Third: PAUL LINDENBURG, managing director of S. Japhet & Co., the great merchant bankers, and director of vast financial concerns in the Netherlands, Austria, Rumania and Canada. Fourth: LESLIE WILLIAM FARROW, chartered accountant, holder of four chairmanships, three deputy-chairmanships and 17 directorships in paper and other interests. Fifth: LORD LUKE OF PAVENHAM, chairman and managing director of Bovril Ltd., and with other interests ranging from goldfields and banks to publishing. These five men between them hold some 75 directorships in large-scale financial or industrial undertakings, and all, with the exception of Lord Luke, reappear on the board of G.F.D.

In the production sphere the most important studio enterprise associated with the group is Pinewood Studios Ltd., with a nominal capital of £300,000, and a charge of the same amount in favour of Equity and Law Life Ass. Soc. On the board of this company we find J. A. RANK, CHARLES BOOT, J.P. (who holds six chairmanships and 18 directorships mostly in building and real estate interests), JOHN CORFIELD, who, with Mr. Rank, is also a director of British National Films;

* This fact may perhaps throw an unexpected light on the recent transfer of control over the Denman Street Trust Co. Ltd. (having important holdings in G.B.P.C. and Moss Empires) from the Ostrers to a new board on which sits M. G. Glyn of Glyn, Mills & Co.

HAROLD G. JUDD, chartered accountant and holder of seven chairmanships and 13 other directorships, and SPENCER MORTIMER REIS. In addition all the directors of B. & D. (E. R. Crammond, C. M. Woolf, Herbert Wilcox, Capt. the Hon. R. Norton, and W. H. Cockburn) sit on the Pinewood board, and B. & D. are reported to hold a ten-year management agreement for the studios.

During 1936 G.F.D. was associated with the following production units in the distribution of their films: *British National Films*, a concern with a nominal capital of £100,000, whose third director (besides Mr. Rank and Mr. Corfield) is LADY A. H. YULE, widow of the millionaire financier, Sir Andrew Yule; *British Pictorial Productions*, with a capital of £5,000; *Capitol Film Corporation*, with a capital of £125,000 and charges of £1,520,000 outstanding with Aldgate Trustees Ltd., and of £160,000 with Equity and Law Life Ass. Soc.; *Cecil Film Productions*, with a nominal capital of £1,000 and charges of £415,000 with Aldgate Trustees; *City Film Corporation*, with a nominal capital of £1,000 and advances amounting to £233,150 from Aldgate Trustees, who appointed a receiver and manager for the company in April 1936; *Herbert Wilcox Productions*, with a capital of £100; and *Grafton Films Ltd.*, and *J. G. & R. B. Wainwright Ltd.*, whose financial position we could not trace.

Here again, therefore, we find a position similar to that of the United Artists group: apart from the main studio enterprises production is carried on by a large number of units mostly with comparatively small capitals and some with heavy debts outstanding.

Before drawing conclusions from this method of finance and investigating the sources of the outstanding production debts, it will be instructive to take a passing glance at one or two of the other groups in the field. In the production sphere influenced by *Associated British Film Distributors* we find a similar structure, save that in this case the renting concern, A.B.F.D., is owned and controlled by the producing organisation *Associated Talking Pictures Ltd.*, which has an authorised capital of £125,000 and owns studio plant at Ealing. During the first ten months of 1936 A.B.F.D. released films made by the following production units other than A.T.P.: *Alexander Film Productions; Franco-London Films* (capital, £5,000, practically all of which is owned by the Société de Credit pour l'Industrie et le Commerce, Paris); *Joe Rock Productions* (capital £100); *Leslie Fuller Productions* (capital £1,000); *Phœnix Films; Stanley Lupino Productions* (capital £1,000); and *Toeplitz Productions* (capital £100,000 and with charges of £32,000 outstanding with Aldgate Trustees).

Among the smaller renters *Butcher's Film Service* deserves mention. This concern is owned by British Photographic Industries Ltd., a company with a nominal capital of £1,000,000, which also controls Ensign Ltd., the Houghton-Butcher companies and other interests. Among the principal shareholders of British Photographic Industries are MAJOR THE HON. J. J. ASTOR, VISCOUNT ASTOR and VISCOUNTESS ASTOR. The balance sheet of the company presented in December 1935, showed a net profit of £54. 6*s*. 1*d*., and the dividends on the preference shares were stated to be in arrears since July 1931.

It will have been noticed that in the references to the smaller production units associated with the two Anglo-American groups, the name of Aldgate Trustees Ltd. constantly recurs as a guarantor of loans. In fact, out of a total of over £4,000,000 sunk in the production side of the film industry during 1936 this company guaranteed more than £2,900,000. Who, then, are the members of this extremely important concern?

Aldgate Trustees Ltd. is a private company registered in July 1935, with a capital of £1,000 of which £98 is paid up. Its directors are F. C. ELLS, and L. H. WILLIAMS, directors of the firm of Glanville, Enthoven & Co., Lloyd's brokers; and S. B. SMITH, a chartered accountant. We have noted that after having advanced some £233,000 to the City Film Corporation, Aldgate Trustees found it necessary to throw that concern into receivership in April 1936. The receiver appointed by Aldgate Trustees was Harold G. Judd. But we have also noted that Mr. Judd is a member of the board of Pinewood Studios, the studio enterprise closely associated with the G.F.D. interests. Moreover, among the concerns of which Mr. Judd is a director is H. J. Enthoven and Sons Ltd., lead merchants. This company appears to be largely a family concern, for the name of Enthoven appears several times in the list of its directors and shareholders. Among the latter is Mr. Frederick Vernon Enthoven, and he is also a director of Glanville, Enthoven & Co.

IT will now be clear that the meteoric expansion of British independent production during the last eighteen months has led to a financial situation bearing all the characteristics of a wildly speculative trade boom rushing towards its culmination. The great majority of the production units are private companies with rela-

STRUCTURE OF THE BRITISH FILM INDUSTRY, AUTUMN 1936

RENTERS	AMERICAN AFFILIATIONS	BRITISH PRODUCTION AFFILIATIONS	EXHIBITION AFFILIATIONS
1. American Renters:			
M.G.M.	Loews's Inc. (M.G.M.)	Various Quota prod. units	London pre-release hall
RADIO PICTURES	R.K.O. Radio	Various Quota prod. units	
WARNER AND FIRST NATIONAL	Warner & First National	Own subsidiary with studio at Teddington	
FOX FILM CO.	20th Century-Fox	Fox British, Wembley, and New World Pictures, Denham	
PARAMOUNT FILM SERVICE	Paramount Inc.	B. & D. and other Quota prod. units	12 super-halls and arrangements with Union Circuit (250 halls)
COLUMBIA	Columbia Pict. Corp.	Paul Soskin Prod. and other units	
2. Anglo-American Renters:			
UNITED ARTISTS	U.A. Corp.	London Film Prods., B. & D., Criterion, British Cine Alliance, Bergner-Czinner, Trafalgar, V. Saville Prods., Erich Pommer Prods., Garrett-Klement, Atlantic, Pall Mall, Worton Hall	Interest in Odeon Circuit and County Circuit
GENERAL FILM DISTRIBUTORS	Universal	Pinewood, B. & D., H. Wilcox Prods., Capitol, City Films, Universal-Wainwright, British National, etc.	New circuit in process of formation
3. Major British Renters:			
GAUMONT-BRITISH DISTRIBUTORS	(20th Century-Fox)	G.B. Pict. Corp., Gainsborough Pict.	G.B. Circuit. Over 300 halls
WARDOUR FILMS AND PATHE PICTURES	none	B.I.P., Welwyn, and other units	A.B.P.C. Circuit. About 290 halls
4. Other British Renters:			
ASS. BRITISH FILM DISTRIBUTORS	Grand National Films Inc.	A.T.P., and independent units	none
TWICKENHAM FILM DISTRIBUTORS (including P.D.C.)	various	Twickenham Studios, New Ideal Pict., J.H. Productions	none
BRITISH LION	Republic Corp. of America	Beaconsfield Studios, Hammer Prods.	none
EQUITY BRITISH	various	None (re-issues).	none
BUTCHER'S FILM SERVICE	various	Various independent units	none
ASS. PRODUCING AND DISTRIBUTING CO.	various	Sound City, U.K. Films and independent producers	none

Colin F. Campbell (Chairman, National Provincial Bank)

tively small capitals, the bulk of their production costs being secured by means of insurance policies against the non-payment of bank overdrafts.

But the boom has three main features peculiar to itself:

(1) It is based almost entirely on *expectation* with very little concrete results to justify the wholesale optimism. The security offered is, in nine cases out of ten, the highly problematical one of the expected returns from films about to be made or in production. At the same time, the possible insertion of a "quality clause" when the Quota Act comes before Parliament for revision this year has very probably contributed to the general expectancy.

(2) Though in the exhibition field ordinary shareholders are, on the whole, obtaining good dividends, in the production sphere they are not—even in the boom period. An analysis of the ordinary share dividends paid during the last two years reveals that of the older companies engaged solely in production, British Lion, B. & D., and A.T.P., paid nothing, while Sound City paid 3% in 1936.

(3) The expansion has, in general, not been financed by the usual procedure of increase in the capital of the companies concerned, but by a spectacular increase in *loans;* whereas in normal booms the increase in business usually enables the expanding enterprises largely to liquidate their loan obligations. In this regard, the case of the Capitol Film Corporation is interesting, for this concern has a considerably larger capital (£125,000) than most of the independent units. Yet in spite of the fact that in the case of at least four Capitol films 37½% of the production costs were guaranteed by G.F.D., the company secured during 1936 guaranteed overdrafts with the Westminster Bank of £450,000, £360,000 and £140,000, and with the District Bank of £150,000, all through Aldgate Trustees. Nor is this all, for it raised debentures and collateral mortgages for £160,000 from the Equity and Law Life Assurance Society.

It has been impossible in this report to go in any detail into the financing of the recent expansions in the exhibition field. But here also the loan method predominated until the last weeks of 1936, when the Union and Odeon circuits were reorganised by the formation of new companies with authorised capital resources of £6,500,000 and £5,000,000 respectively. In the first ten months of 1936 the gigantic sum of over £7,800,000 was secured in the form of mortgages or debentures on cinema properties. In the advancing of these vast loans the three concerns which figure most prominently are the *Law Debenture Corporation, Branch Nominees Ltd.*, and the *Equity and Law Life Assurance Society*.

The chairman of the Law Debenture Corporation is SIR MILES MATTINSON, K.C., who is also chairman of Ellerman Lines Ltd., the chief shipping company among the interests now controlled by the youthful Sir John Ellerman, heir to the £36,000,000 estate left him by his father. The parent organisation of Branch Nominees Ltd. is the National Provincial Bank, which has itself granted large credits to the film industry. The Equity and Law Life Assurance Society has financial interests covering all three spheres of the film Trade. One of its directors, MR. R. F. HOLME, is also a director of Radio Pictures and Radio-Keith-Orpheum.

Finally, we can indicate one further important characteristic of the film boom; a characteristic, moreover, common to other industries. The relative increase in loan financing is one of the most powerful agents in the trend towards ever greater concentration. In this case we have seen how the credits obtained by the various production companies increasingly tend to emanate from a few powerful financial groups, who thus obtain a degree of control overriding the competitive barriers within the industry.

John Maxwell, Chairman, Associated British Picture Corp. Ltd., Director, Gaumont-British Picture Corporation Ltd.

Sir John Ellerman

Ten years ago about nine-tenths of the feature films registered in this country were American. Since that time the British film industry has expanded with tremendous violence, financed during 1936 alone to the extent of more than twenty-four million pounds. To-day, more than two-thirds of the feature films registered in this country are still American.

In this enquiry the Film Council made extensive use of the files of the "Financial News," the "Financial Times," the "Kinematograph Weekly," the Labour Research Department, "To-day's Cinema" and the "Stock Exchange Gazette," It takes this opportunity of acknowledging its gratitude for their use.

World Films News is glad to announce that Dr. F. D. Klingender, the well-known student of the social problems of art, has prepared at the suggestion of the editorial staff a course of lectures dealing with the fundamental problems touching the realist film. His lectures, which will be available for booking to film societies, will cover the following subjects:—

1. Art and Society in Modern Times: Three Lectures illustrated by about 40 lantern slides each.
   (a) Classicism, Romanticism and Realism, 1789–1870, the development of French painting from David to Courbet.
   (b) Impressionism and the three founders of Post-Impressionism, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Cezanne, 1870–1900.
   (c) The European art movements of the 20th century from Cubism to Abstract Art and Surrealism.
2. Mass Appeal: a Study of the American Film and its Public, 1903–36 (one lecture).
3. The Russian Film and its Social Background, 1917–36.

Enquiries should be addressed to the editorial office, *W.F.N.*

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

EDITED BY H. E. BLYTH

"De Lawd"

THE GREEN PASTURES. (Marc Connelly and William Keighley—Warner Bros.)

Rex Ingram, Oscar Polk, Eddie Anderson, Hank Wilson, Ernest Whitman, George Reed.

Nothing will induce me to argue about whether this picture is what is called "commercial" or not. But with my last breath I will defend its beauty, its sincerity, its nobility, and its piety. If you are interested to see a film that unquestionably has these very qualities, then see *The Green Pastures*. Lack of the commercial success of such a film could only be a criticism of the public, not of the picture. It is beside the point to discuss "acting" and "direction" of such a picture. Thanks to the nature of the coloured people, I can believe that the players lived their parts in a spirit of complete reverence. To suggest blasphemy or to say that the cinema is not the place for such a subject is to deny the divine ubiquity and simplicity which are the roots of any faith worthy of the name.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

If this film is allowed, the Divine Judgment cannot but fall upon this country.

—Rev. F. L. Langston

The picture is too blasphemous and shocking to contemplate.

—Admiral Sir George King-Hall

The Green Pastures is probably the best film, in the moral sense, that has ever been shown to the public in the cinema. It makes you, as children and simple people say, feel good all over. It is impeccably honest, dazzlingly simple, and enormously moving. And if it raises unsuspected questions of theology—if it sets you wondering, for instance, about your born certainty of the colour of the God-head—it strikes at nothing in faith that is real and deeply rooted. I cannot see how the most strongly sectarian of us can resent the suggestion that God, for every human being of every nation, must be comfortable, recognisable, and good.

The God of *The Green Pastures* is the God of the Negroes. He is called "De Lawd" and He is black. Dressed like a Negro preacher, and surrounded by dusky angels and archangels, He fathers a heaven that should make every Negro want to get there. It is an ornate, happy place

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with gilded fencing and pillow-soft clouds, with swings for the cherubs, green lawns for picnicking, custards for everyone, and an enormous fish-fry.

De Lawd is kind, but He is a careful master. He keeps the heavenly accounts accurately, with the help of the Archangel Gabriel. His study is swept out daily by cleaning-angels, with checked aprons tied over their wings. And He worries, too, about the sun and the moon and the little planet called the earth, which he once made with a bit of extra firmament. And every thousand years or so He opens the golden gates and climbs down the big staircase to see how Adam and all his children are getting on down below.

The whole story is set out in the framework of a modern Negro Sunday school, and given the authority of a negro preacher's sermon to a bunch of small and wide-eyed piccanninies. Throughout the whole picture there is no white man, and no white man's point of view.

The film is admittedly a daring departure for Hollywood, even more risky than a biography of Louis Pasteur, even more dangerous than a transcript of Shakespeare or Dickens. Only two sequences in the film—the decadence of the world at the time of Noah, and a short whoopee sequence of night-club life in Babylon—have any touch about them of Hollywood influence. The rest of the film is gravely humorous, human, and reverent, beautifully annotated by the Hall Johnson Choir of Spiritual Singers, and representing a high moment in screen history. Except for that single adult passage at the close, which reconciles the Old Testament with the New, and resolves the God of Vengeance into the God of Suffering, it is a clear and simple expression of faith, seen with a child's straight vision and told in a child's pictorial language. And any film that can snatch at even the cloud and wrack of the wisdom of all the ages and present it for the understanding of a ten-year-old is surely something rather special and rare.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

LIBELLED LADY. (Jack Conway—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Jean Harlow, Myrna Loy, William Powell, Spencer Tracy.

Here is the old William Powell, dynamic, debonair, never more bent on startling discovery than when he seems most at a loss. Here is the old Myrna Loy, nose deliciously tip-tilt, tongue perpetually in cheek, batting a plurality of eyelids. Here is the old Jean Harlow, practically platinum, mainly minx. And here, as always, a brand-new Spencer Tracy. For each and all of whom Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have dished up a story of nice originality. Miss Loy plays the part of a millionheiress libelled in a newspaper edited by Mr. Tracy. Powell is the young man paid off by the newspaper to see that the libel, though untrue at the moment of printing, will certainly be true by the time he has lured Miss Loy into the crime of husband-snatching. Complications twist and twirl through the story with the happy insinuation of a fire-engine whisking through traffic-block after traffic-block. This is the year's raciest comedy. It has vim and a merry violence; it has punch and unparalleled go. Four great stars provide the punch; and you must go.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

Libelled Lady is a lark, a grand, broad, rowdy Hollywood lark. Like most larks, it goes on a bit too long, but there are not many people who will make that a cause for grumbling. There's something about a faked divorce in it, and a newspaper libel suit; but I take long odds you won't remember. What you will remember is William Powell flopping on his face in the stream, and Spencer Tracy in top-hat and shirt dressing in front of the mirror, and Myrna Loy in almost everything she does, and Jean Harlow, as a much-bartered bride, quivering like an angry dynamo in the sheerest necessities of wedding finery. I don't quite see myself how anyone who enjoys pictures as pictures is going to keep away from *Libelled Lady*, but if he does, I'm sorry for him.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

THE PRESIDENT'S MYSTERY. (Phil Rosen—Republic.)

Henry Wilcoxon, Betty Furness, Evelyn Brent.

I think people will show by their box-office votes that they want films to deal with present social ideas, but progressively. The movies have been extending feelers in this direction. *Bullets or Ballots* went so far as to openly show a group of bankers receiving the racketeering boodle from their city's gang-ring, whereas previous films had been content with hinting at "higher-ups." *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* went so far as to prove that a millionaire who wanted to give away his money was not crazy. But *The President's Mystery* goes the whole way in making big business a villain. It shows the head of a monopolistic national canning corporation to be utterly unscrupulous in the methods which he is willing to employ to keep his system in control. Into the general social idea has been woven a snappy story of murder and mistaken identity, so that folks will know this is still a movie, and not reality. This is still a good idea as it will help toward acceptance of the film as regular stuff. Republic is to be violently congratulated for this picture.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

BULLETS OR BALLOTS. (William Keighley—First National.)

Edward G. Robinson, Joan Blondell, Humphrey Bogart, Barton MacLane.

Bullets or Ballots is another demonstration that crime does not pay any more. It is direct line of descent from *Scarface* and the lesser gangster films. But times have changed. Speakeasies have given place to pin-table saloons; bootlegging has changed to lottery promotion, and the racketeers rebuke one another for being too free with their revolvers. Robinson plays that grand old character of melodramatic fiction, the policeman who masquerades as a crook. Joan Blondell is the lone white woman in this drama of an underworld of men. There is a suggestion of a romance between her and Robinson, but it is frustrated by the death of her hero. *Bullets or Ballots* is strong and simple stuff, not as exciting as it would have been five years ago, but with plenty of suspense and a sprinking of humour. —Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

Eddie Robinson assured me that *Bullets or Ballots* was "good fun." He enjoyed making it more than any other. Now I could not possibly pretend that I enjoyed seeing it more than any other, and would rank it well down the list of Eddie's pictures. There are some incidental moments when the film achieves drive. The gang scenes are well done. Warners always contrive to make their killers look pictorial, But the film never succeeds in convincing; it always remains a fairy tale full of bold bad men, a political beanstalk, and Eddie Robinson as a babe in the Bowery wood.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

W.F.N. SELECTION

The Green Pastures	***
Libelled Lady	**
Bullets or Ballots	**
The President's Mystery	*

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

The Green Pastures

Libelled Lady

The President's Mystery

Bullets or Ballots

Dreams Come True

Don Donald

His Lordship

Come and Get It

Ramona

A Woman Rebels

Ladies in Love

The Bride Walks Out

Sabotage

Nightingale

"Bullets or Ballots." (Courtesy 1st National)

DREAMS COME TRUE. (Reginald Denham—Reunion.)

Frances Day, Hugh Wakefield, Nelson Keys, Frederick Bradshaw.

This film is a happy adaption of the musical comedy *Clo, Clo*. Reginald Denham, one of the most intelligent of younger British film directors, has contrived to preserve the spice and spirit of the original production and to add to it lovely exterior settings of the texture we used to have when Cecil Hepworth was a director. Frances Day has better acting opportunities in her new picture than in any other British film. Her delightful singing and the natural charm with which she plays the part of the actress who sighed for the country and who was an expert farmer make this film pleasant and piquant entertainment. *Dreams Come True* has a merit rare in British films: that of not pretending to be other than it is. It has melody, comedy, romance, piquancy and honesty, and is therefore excellent light entertainment.

—Seton Margrave, *The Daily Mail*

DON DONALD. (Walt Disney.)

Donald Duck, Disney's untamable terror, fierce, fiery, worst-tempered actor on the screen, has fallen a victim to a woman's wiles! The object of his affections is called Donna. She co-stars with him for the first time in *Don Donald*, latest Disney Silly Symphony. Though this is Donna's début, she has already achieved fame as the first newcomer to the Disney studio whom Donald has not yet challenged with his notorious battle-cry: "Wanna fight?" Donald's only comment when interviewed was: "Well, you know how it is—a fellow gets kinda lonely."

—*The Sunday Referee*

HIS LORDSHIP. (Herbert Mason—Gaumont-British.)

George Arliss, Romilly Lunge, Rene Ray.

George Arliss returns to delight his admirers twice over—once as Viscount Dunchester, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and once as that Minister's twin brother, Richard Fraser, wandering humorist. How the photographer can bring these two men intimately together in the same room is one of the mysteries; but frequently meet they do, and they are not two but one. Mr. Arliss has supplied touches subtly to differentiate them; yet they are not two but one. A triumph both for actor and the notoriously truthful tense. Like everything in which Mr. Arliss appears, the story is relevant and pointed. The film is very slight but it is most adroitly presented. "Double" without any visible "toil or trouble"; double with fun and success. But I doubt if an Eastern slave would ever use the word "exonerate." —E. V. L., *Punch*

The Arliss following will feel that it has a grievance with this film. Neither the story nor the directing, nor the casting are good enough for this famous star. He needs the grandeur of authentic historical settings, with big themes, strong drama, and convincing backgrounds. In this film he gets nothing but cheap theatricality, and does not escape the reproach of adding to it himself. It is difficult to see how he could have done otherwise. It is pretentious stuff. But it would have made a wonderful farce. If Sydney Howard sees it he will lament a lost opportunity.

—*The Birmingham Mail*

COME AND GET IT. (Howard Hawks and William Wyler—United Artists.)

Edward Arnold, Frances Farmer, Walter Brennan Joel McCrea.

Astonishing settings of the lumber trade in the snow-clad forests of Wisconsin; an ambitious supervisor who jilts a young saloon singer; her reincarnation in the person of her daughter, and the rather unpalatable re-awakened passion of a middle-aged man—these are the milestones of this magnificently produced drama. As the central figure, Edward Arnold, with his burly Napoleonic presence and bass chuckle, gives the show of his career, fighting a losing battle for sympathy. Frances Farmer, in two generations, jumps at once to the front rank of beautiful, intelligent and sensitive actresses—a blend of Ann Harding and Constance Cummings. The film's moral is that log-rolling is only profitable when done literally. —P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

Loretta Young in "Ramona"

I would not say that *Come and Get It* is one of Sam Goldwyn's major successes. It opens with stirring scenes of logs being rolled down into the stream for transport to the mills. Edward Arnold is a ruthless lumber captain. He meets Lotta, an entertainer of the camp hotel, and falls for her. He falls so heavily that he starts a grand fight in the saloon, waged by means of drink trays. This is a new idea in saloon clean-ups, and I enjoyed it very much. It was a lovely smash. Arnold lets the girl down just as she has decided to go straight. Twenty years later he discovers the existence of the deceased Lotta's daughter and proceeds to indulge his impossible adoration for the pretty girl. I have nothing but praise for the acting and wish I could say the same for those who constructed the story.

—A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

RAMONA. (Henry King—20th Century-Fox.)
Loretta Young, Don Ameche, Kent Taylor, Pauline Frederick.

Another Technicolour hit. Watch for the scene where Loretta Young, locked in her room, turns her head toward the window. It's one of those flashes of accidentally perfect tone-colour that come still too rarely in these films. When they are planned, rather than caught on the wing, colour will be a great expressive medium in films. *Ramona* is the third or fourth of a series of films which have shown the brutal injustice by which the white settlers stole the lush California valleys from natives who had possessed the land for generations. It's pretty safe to expose injustices when they are that far back.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

Chronomatically, the picture is superior to anything we have seen in the colour line. Without striving for the splashing effects of *Becky Sharp* but deepening the "natural colour" tones of *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, it has achieved warmth and vigour without subjecting its beholders to a constant optic bombardment. Here and there the camera men have insisted upon showing off, inserting gaudy sunsets, sunrises and glimpses of horsemen on the horizon for no other reason than to demonstrate what they could do with sunsets, sunrises and horsemen on the horizon. But generally they have been content with modest and harmonious tableaux, with tonal composition that is restful, pleasant and of definite relation to the dramatic context.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

A WOMAN REBELS. (Mark Sandrich—RKO Radio.)
Katharine Hepburn, Herbert Marshall, Elizabeth Allen.

I can never make up my mind whether Katharine Hepburn is a genius or just a contract that has to be worked out. Her constant, open-mouth smile annoys me. On the other hand now and then she gets me pulsating with emotion. Why somebody wished this dull, mid-Victorian story on her I can't guess. She meets a naval officer; immediately has a baby. Then Herbert Marshall turns up and is, oh! so annoyingly loyal and true till death. This is one of those films which (trying to be kind) I must call (with a slightly superior masculine smile) "a woman's picture." —Harris Deans, *The Sunday Graphic*

Hepburn is slipping. Bless the Little Woman, it isn't altogether her fault. Her acting is more defiantly competent, more (if I may use the word) akimbo than ever. She is still, at heart, a fresh and freckled tom-boy; an out-of-door, ingenuous land-girl. But I wish to heaven she'd get back to the land. Miss Hepburn is *not* cut out to play Great Ladies of the Past. Nor even, as on this occasion, Great Ladies with a Past. As Pamela Thistlewaite (do I scent golden opportunities for a "Knock, knock"?) she battles gamely with the exigencies of costume and a coiffure that resembles, oddly, several beehives. Mr. Marshall's acting is still perfunctory, his manners impeccable. On this occasion, however, the combination of manners and modes is not a happy one. Less happy even than the story, which is misery and melodrama run riot. I wish Miss Hepburn would make a Western.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

LADIES IN LOVE. (Edward H. Griffith—20th Century-Fox.)
Janet Gaynor, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, Simone Simon, Don Ameche.

Love and love alone is the theme of the play on which Twentieth Century has based its picture, and love and love again is the dimpled puppet-master controlling the destinies of the film's four (4) leading ladies. That, as the laconic Mr. Coolidge might have commented, is a lot of love, even though it is parcelled evenly among Janet Gaynor, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, Simone Simon and the men in the cast. The approach to their stories is definitely that of the romantic confessional tales and, if you will pardon the liberty, these would be appropriate chapter headings: "I Loved and Lost a Count," by Miss Young; "So I Married the Doctor," by Miss Gaynor; "I Learned Too Late That You Can't Play at Love," by Miss Bennett, and "Never Take No for an Answer," by Miss Simon. Although I dread the thought of dropping an apple of discord into Hollywood's Olympus, Miss Gaynor impressed me more favourably than the Misses Young, Bennett and Simon. Edward Griffith's direction has been smooth and the entire production has a satiny texture. It's still a woman's picture.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Ladies in Love is a sorority meeting, in Budapest, of Janet Gaynor, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, and Simone Simon. Without hair-pulling Miss Gaynor triumphs throughout.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

THE BRIDE WALKS OUT. (Leigh Jason—RKO Radio.)
Barbara Stanwyck, Robert Young, Gene Raymond, Helen Broderick, Ned Sparks.

This is a comedy of domestic quarrels, for besides the hero and heroine there are Ned Sparks and Helen Broderick bickering all the time. I got a bit tired of so much strife, and, much as I enjoy Ned Sparks' disgruntled resignation to feminine things as they are, I had too much of him this time. Robert Young hovers about as a rich playboy who might have made quite a good mate for the girl if she had only met him before instead of just after the marriage. Personally, if I had been the producers, I would have given the girl to Robert. But then, Gene always did represent the sort of fellow I would avoid like a cold in the head.

—A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

The film opens in the broad highway of sentimental romance, with Miss Barbara Stanwyck as the unwilling mannequin, who is persuaded by Mr. Gene Raymond to leave the world of business for that of matrimony, turns unexpectedly into the lively street of farce, down which Mr. Ned Sparks trundles his load of wise-

cracks, ventures momentarily into the thoroughfare of pure comedy, where Mr. Robert Young scatters money and wit, and eventually loses its way in the tortuous lane of mock heroics and real love. Had the director been bold enough to regulate the crossings and to free the film from the congested traffic of romantic verbiage be might well have succeeded in making a shorter and a more amusing film. As it is, Miss Stanwyck not only "walks out," but strolls aimlessly down each street until Mr. Young takes her back to the point from which she started.

—*The Times*

SABOTAGE. (Hitchcock—Gaumont-British)

Sabotage, Hitchcock's new film, has got the same plot as the last two or three films he has made—the same Hitchcock twists and the same ingenious construction, with the climax earlier in the film than any other director dares to put it. All this means that it is grand entertainment, and very exciting. There would be no more to say except that "Hitchcock has done it again," were it not for the fact that Hitchcock has started doing something else as well.

He has suddenly gone human, and the characters are not incidental attachments to an ingenious and thrilling script, but genuine people whose characters and reactions control, modify, and illuminate the story.

The chief character, played by Oscar Homolka, is the manager of a small cinema, and unwilling tool of a foreign power in a campaign of sabotage in London. He wants money so he does what he is told. All the incidents in the film take place as a direct result of this man's peculiar character, with its mixture of direct action and complete indecisiveness. Homolka plays the part brilliantly and Hitchcock's direction of him is even more brilliant. Sylvia Sidney, as Homolka's wife, and Desmond Tester as his wife's small brother, are equally important from the psychological point of view. Sylvia Sidney gives her best performance since Mamoulian's *City Streets*.

All through the film the typical Hitchcock touches, especially in the cockney crowd scenes, are less artificial than previously.

More than this, Hitchcock has at last got back to something which he used to possess in the old silent days, and that is the introduction of really moving and emotionally dramatic incidents. The curious thing is that these are, most of them, based on the typical Hitchcock twists; for example, the woman's small brother is killed in a bomb explosion; she discovers that her husband is entirely responsible for this. Two episodes follow; in the first she wanders into the cinema which she and her husband own, where an audience composed chiefly of children is watching Disney's *Who Killed Cock Robin?* As she watches, she begins to laugh and sits down amongst the children. At the point where Cock Robin is actually slain, a roar of laughter goes up from the children all round her, while she rises to her feet in intolerable agony; and as she leaves the cinema the voices from the screen pursue her with the words—*Who Killed Cock Robin?* Shortly afterwards, following a terrifically well directed scene during which she kills her husband, there is a shot of her going down a crowded East End street with a Scotland Yard detective (who is, of course, in love with her); Hitchcock suddenly cuts in a perfectly realistic shot of her brother running towards her through the crowd. She catches hold of him and on that movement Hitchcock cuts to the reverse angle showing her standing on the crowded pavement bewildered, her hands on the shoulders of an ordinary errand-boy. This is the best cut and best timed sequence I have yet seen in any British film.

" The Bride Walks Out "

So there it is. Hitchcock seems to be starting on a new line and an important one both for himself and his public. This film does not establish it, but it does show the possibilities. Now what is needed is for Hitchcock to scrap his thriller stories and go for something real. If he does this, the promises underlying *Sabotage* will mature into something really important for British films.

—Wright, *W.F.N.*

NIGHTINGALE. (Nikolai Ekk—Russian.) Valentina Ivasheva, N. Kashkarova.

At first we were inclined to be bitter about it, but it really does not deserve one's indignation. The blunt and unpleasant fact is that *Nightingale*, the Soviet's first all-colour picture, is pretty bad. Unless you look at it through red-tinted glasses and have a Russian interpreter by your side, it is likely to bore you pink.

The picture is a rather amazing anachronism in one respect, combining that newest attribute of the cinema—colour—with an editing technique characteristic of the silent films of the pre-war era. Instead of employing superimposed dialogue titles which permit us to follow the speeches and action, it makes ceaseless use of long subtitles explaining not merely action that is to come but action that never is depicted on the screen.

Mr. Ekk's colour composition is vagrantly arresting, particularly in those scenes where he has subdued his tints to the scale just above that of ordinary black and white photography, but he has been guilty of some outrageous lithographs, and he shows himself to be overfond of portraiture. In this connection, incidentally, it might be noted that the Russian colour process is more successful than Hollywood's Technicolour in dealing with flesh tones. In general, however, it is all too obvious that the Russian colour-film still is in an experimental state. It is sharply defined one minute, blurred the next, and garish and sombre by unexpected turns.

The story proper is equally vacillating, asking consideration as a drama of pre-revolutionary Russia while containing more nonsense than we might have expected from a thorough farce. The tale, briefly, is that of the revolt of the women employees of a pottery factory after they learn that a fire which destroyed the old plant and killed several of their number had been planned by the factory owner for the insurance money.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

"Sabotage"

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The Breath of Reality

By G. J. CONS, *specialist member of the Geographic Committee of the Central Council for School Broadcasting.*

It is true that school broadcasts, as performances, have reached a satisfactory standard. Within the limits of good scripts, lecturers with radio personality, and static microphones, the officials may be said to have achieved a uniform level of good production.

But it is also true that most of the Committees are wedded to stereotyped courses. They follow the accepted lines of school instruction, treating the subject in hand as a branch of pure knowledge and forgetting the main function of school broadcasting.

To think of the microphone as a patent lesson-producing machine is to misapply the educational uses of radio. To substitute the spoken word for the printed text-book is to lose entry to the vivid world of sound imagery which is so important in the supplementing of classroom teaching. It is in the borderland territory where academic subjects touch on real life that the microphone can make its greatest contribution to the schools.

The Central Council has been cautious in any departure from the set courses. But a recent innovation indicates a slowly changing attitude. Two-feature programmes directed to the schools have lately been broadcast, one dealing with the herring fisheries, the other with mining. Their admittance into the programme gave promise of a new growing-point in school radio, but their treatment revealed that actuality must go a long way before it fulfils its true purpose of dramatising everyday events for the classroom.

Sound Picture of a Coal-Mine—so ran the announcement in the *Radio Times*. It was to be the most ambitious actuality broadcast yet attempted for schools. Here was an opportunity to bring the children into touch with the realities of a coal miner's life, and by a mobile microphone to fashion a living picture of the mining village, the pit head and the coal face. Such a programme should be expected to awaken in the children an imaginative experience that would tell on their lives, arousing sympathetic understanding and a greater concern for the miner's lot. For half an hour they could gain contact with the workers of one of our key industries.

But the opportunity was missed. As actuality it was a failure. It was artificial. It was done in the style of a story book that points the moral. The story was well told, the sound illustrations came in smoothly, and the moral was given emphatically at the end. But it was an attempt at a lesson on a coal mine, and was obviously prepared by one who thinks of the way in which this kind of thing is taught in schools. It gave the feeling of a nicely balanced literary description.

Even at the coal face we had the same smooth-running story, with no touch of realism. Here were the miners stripped to the waist, twisting their sweating bodies in the dim light of their lamps, the damp air, the distant boom of shots just fired, the oppressiveness of cramped space. But there was no sound record of the coal face, the supreme point in the miner's life underground. If it were too difficult to record the sounds of the pit, then, in order to give the reality of the scene, the observer's own reactions done in vivid personal terms, would have been more convincing than an ordered, make-believe story interrupted by rehearsed interviews with a deputy and a miner.

Again, the sound pictures of the surface machinery increased the impression of artificiality. For example, a verbal description of the power house was followed by sounds supporting the explanation. To give the impression of reality the sound sequences should be made an integral part of the whole; they should not be used merely as illustrations. In fashioning these actuality broadcasts for schools the producer should not copy the text-book and treat the sound sequences as of secondary importance. He must forget all about lessons. He must create the experiences of the living fact, link them together by vivid direct reporting of his own personal reactions and arrange them in convincing order.

On that level radio will take the child beyond the classroom into living contact with the real life of the community. The bane of our schools is unreality; they need to be brought into touch with the market place, the factory, the mine, the office, and with all aspects of our communal life. School broadcasting can bring the breath of reality into the classroom. Herein lies its future.

BRIDIE BACKS B.B.C.

In a recent issue of "The Star", J. B. Priestley condemned the autocratic methods of the B.B.C. He attacked the system whereby all B.B.C. speakers are required to submit manuscripts a fortnight beforehand, and to present themselves at the studio for rehearsals.

Last month we published the comments of celebrated writers and speakers on this system. All agreed with Mr. Priestley; all denounced the cramping of free speech by inflexible regulations.

We are therefore pleased to publish a comment from Mr. James Bridie, eminent Scottish playwright, upholding the B.B.C. and questioning Mr. Priestley's case. Mr. Bridie writes:

If a music hall were enterprising enough to engage Mr. Priestley it would ask for details of his turn in advance, require him to rehearse and pay him such rates as performers in his line of business were willing to accept. Why should he object when another organisation running to a strict timetable and subject to a rigorous censorship offers him the same conditions?

Firstly, because the B.B.C. is large, solemn, official and a little absurd and is easily the best whipping post in Britain.

Secondly, because Mr. Priestley is, like most successful writers, chronically a bit above himself. I can't see why a writer of story books and stage plays should demand more consideration than any other public entertainer. I can't see why, publicity apart, he should want to broadcast at all. He is an amateur among professionals.

When Mr. Priestley writes a newspaper article he is a high-grade professional. When he makes an after-dinner speech he is taking part in a purely amateur game. He happens to be a very good amateur broadcast lecturer, but that doesn't help his analogies or alter his status. The Press custom of granting high journalistic rank to distinguished pugilists, murderers and thieves is, to my mind, a bad custom. The amateur should be humble and be kept humble.

When Mr. Priestley asks how many successful writers figure in the B.B.C. programmes, I cannot answer offhand; but I have heard several of these dry-lipped, hesitant persons. I think they would all have been the better of more careful rehearsal and that, apart from Mr. Beerbohm, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Priestley himself, they compared very badly in their manner of delivery and the arrangement of their matter with the professional teachers, clergymen, actors and announcers who earn their living by talking.

JAMES BRIDIE

LEAVING THE TAP ON

A suburban fan of the gardening talks analyses the service the B.B.C. gives to the thousands like himself who don't write letters to Broadcasting House. He claims that each listener gets half-an-hour of enjoyment each week, whereas, on a percentage basis he is only entitled to two minutes.

IT'S THE SAME old trouble: we shall come to wreck upon a definition.

So let's get over that difficulty first.

Radio emits two kinds of sound: those we listen to and those we hear.

The second kind can be sub-divided into:

(*a*) Sounds that exist through indifference.
(*b*) Sounds that exist through laziness.
(*c*) Sounds that other people encourage.
(*d*) Sounds that survive.

Get a clear idea of the difference, and we go a long way towards solving that hardy perennial, "What is wrong with the Radio?"

For wireless is in the same class with Malvolio's "greatness": some are born with it, some achieve it, and some have it thrust upon them.

That's the trouble.

My village is a fast-growing London dormitory, and is as representative a self-contained community as any you'd find in England. What we like is typical: but there's the rub, what do we like?

But for one thing, I should be convinced that the B.B.C. know the answer to that very much better than any member of the community they serve. They receive thousands of letters voicing the likes and dislikes of listeners, and one would suppose that was a guide. But there's one thing that invalidates that: only some listeners write.

It would still be sufficient if the correspondents were representative, but they certainly are not. They are the vocal type—and that's a class on its own.

The man who writes letters to the Press is as well defined a type as the man who likes whisky, or the woman who attends prayer meetings. It would be a mistake to suppose the whole community—or even the majority—think as they do.

I have had the wireless for ten years, and have never written a single letter to the B.B.C. They have no idea what I like.

Yes, the retort is obvious: but there are hundreds of thousands like me, and to say the B.B.C. don't know—and don't care—what all those listeners want would be untrue.

The B.B.C. have to cater for about seven million people, of which the great majority are able to listen only in the evenings—say, from 7 till 11 p.m. Four hours a night, or about thirty hours a week.

Those seven millions have every conceivable kind of human interest. Some like sport; some want poetry; others are interested in nothing but gardening or Norman architecture. Some even like dance music. It is difficult to understand the tastes of other people, but we know they exist, and that's the main thing. Even those that like sport probably have one particular sport—racing, football or cricket, or the throwing of a pretty dart, to the exclusion of all others.

If you classified your seven million into a thousand different groups, each group would still be too large for any type of programme to be ideal for all in it. Even so, each group would be entitled only to one thousandth of the thirty hours; that is to say, to a programme lasting 1 minute 48 seconds.

So that no listener has any cause to grouse if he gets each week an item that really pleases him lasting a couple of minutes.

It is fair to say that by a miracle of compromising, each listener actually gets at least a half-an-hour's first-class entertainment.

This is the half-hour's entertainment we listen to: much of all else that is broadcast comes into the second category—sounds that we merely hear.

The one big defect of wireless is that it is available all the time. This is an astonishing charge, seeing that one may switch the receiving set off whenever the programme is not wanted.

Unfortunately, we don't.

Having heard the item we wanted, the set is left on and the rest of the evening is spent to a background of weather report, condensed musical comedy, poetry readings, a debate on growing vegetable marrows, and music by the cubic mile. Some of these sounds are tolerated because they might as well be there as not; others, more actively obnoxious, are suffered merely because of the bother of getting up to switch off the set.

Our own fault entirely, of course, and therefore no sense of resentment is engendered. But it is very different with those two other categories—the Sounds that Other People Encourage, and the Sounds that Survive.

The next house to mine has one of those wireless sets that can reach out to the far ends of the earth, and bring in anything that is broadcast at any time, from anywhere. To do this, it has to be highly selective; and to be highly selective, it necessarily suffers from a lamentable deficit of top notes. I don't know what the neighbours hear, but I hear the bottom half of all that comes through.

Twenty years ago, campaigners regarded drink as the one form of intemperance calling for combat. To-day, listening in has definitely become a form of intemperance. That next-door set is on before I leave for business; and, I am assured, it is on all day. I know it is on all day on Sunday, because I hear it all over the garden while I am trying to put into effect the latest B.B.C. advice on vegetable marrows.

So, in answer to the question, "What do you listen to?" I reply: "That." Most of the infernal stuff comes from a foreign station that has a sort of fanfare call sign; and the sound of that fanfare will haunt me through the misty mid-regions of the Styx and the ghoul-haunted woodlands that lie beyond. It is said that one of the most exquisite tortures requires one drop of water to follow another, dropping on the same place. That perpetually perpetrated fanfare has a like effect.

Finally, there are the sounds that survive. These consist largely of resonances. They are the accentuated sounds of distant sets; and you can hear them from afar off, long after distance has obliterated all other emissions: throaty sounds for ever limited to one note.

My own set is a first-class affair that brings in only the National and London Regional stations. I said it was a first-class set—and I ought to know, because I designed and made it myself, and so nothing can expect to be more satisfactory. It is sufficiently good to convince me that the B.B.C. broadcast is, technically, magnificent.

A great many listeners do not know how good the broadcast is—and that is one of the chief reasons why they so bitterly dislike some of the material performed.

Take, for instance, chamber music.

Most listeners lump all chamber music together, under one heading, whether it was composed by the joyous Haydn, or the aggressive Bartók. Naturally. Thanks to the intervention of their set, the music probably sounds much less like a string quartette than a duet between two flutes—the bass having been lost in the loudspeaker, and the upper partials amid the stray capacities.

I like the B.B.C. programmes. Sometimes for whole evenings there is not a single item that I want to hear. But I have plenty of other things to do—as I had before wireless was invented. If I were given the task of preparing the programme for a day, I am certain I could not devise a better programme that I should find on at least one day of the seven—I might concentrate into it a higher proportion of the things I personally wanted to hear, but for balance and catholicity of taste my best effort would be no better than the B.B.C.'s average. Anyone who thinks they could do better would find it an amusing experiment to try it, and submit the effort to friends at home and at the office. The volume of criticism and abuse would surprise them.

Personally, I listen to Marjory Hayward's quartet, the Proms, the children's hour, and talks on the political situation abroad, in that order. Some years ago, the children's hour was better entertainment than it is now—there was just a

Review of Year's Broadcasting

Development of "Feature" Programmes
High-Spots of the Year

By GEORGE AUDIT

During 1936 the B.B.C. gave its "Feature" Programme section the status of a Department. That is technically a most important development, and as a result Feature productions have travelled a great way since the Christmas Day programme a year ago.

May Day, *Gallipoli*, and *March of the* '45 were conspicuous successes and should certainly be repeated. Each worked out a style and a technique for presenting its own type of subject. *May Day*, making use of contemporary songs and comments and reconstructed incidents, presented the story of May Day from an early Pagan rite to the modern Labour demonstration. The St. George's Day, Empire and Christmas Day programmes should have been similarly constructed. Instead they were a jumble of speeches and quotations, without time sequence, without inter-connection, and consequently lifeless. I have never *seen* any radio setting so vividly as I did in the *Gallipoli* programme. Music, declamation, contemporary description all bent themselves to the job of making you feel the battle.

A few weeks later they produced *Kitchener*. It was written by a good historian, Mr. Temperley, in the manner of the historical novel, and for that very reason it failed miserably. Radio cannot borrow a technique. Radio is one thing; the novel is another.

A too-close imitation of documentary film technique was the undoing of *Underground*. Considering its tradition, it was ambitious of the B.B.C. to attempt a programme showing the whole life and working of London's Underground railways. But they attempted too much in trying to make the listener see the whole railway system as a single entity, like a map.

Two recent productions of Gilliam's deserve honourable mention: *Battleship*, a picture of a day's life on board a British dreadnought, and *Television*. His handling of so difficult a subject, when the B.B.C. Controller had already welcomed this new medium with faint praise, had a touch of expertness. It is something to make the television announcers and engineers talk about the limitations of their medium at an official opening in the presence of the P.M.G.

Of the big Outside Broadcasts last year the Petersen-McAvoy fight, the Cup Final, the Darts Championship, the maiden voyage of the *Queen Mary*, the Olympic Games commentaries, the National and the Derby, and the Lewis-Harvey and Foord-Neusel fights are best remembered. Often the least ambitious were the most successful. The last ten throws in the Darts final got you right on to your toes, while the Olympic commentaries were often unintelligible. Anybody who heard the Petersen-McAvoy fight will remember the excellent commentary by the Canadian journalist, Bob Bowman. None of the English commentators have the same friendly tone, the same eye for significant details and the same painstaking methods.

The last twelve months have also seen developments in the news service. It is not an easy matter to hold attention for twenty-five minutes with items of raw news. John Coatman has not only managed to do that but has also improved the quality and accuracy of his service. His practice of including short descriptive talks on topical events, and occasionally an eyewitness account is a valuable contribution to public information. There have been serious lapses on occasions like the death of King George, the early days of the Spanish War and the Constitutional crisis last December when reporting has been either excessive or inadequate. But responsibility for this rests in higher quarters than the News Department.

Leaving the Tap On (cont.)

little more naiveté about it. My eldest child (aged six) never pays the slightest attention to the children's hour. In fact, the wireless appears to be much too abstract to command her interest at any time. Possibly adults like it for the same reason that they like *Alice in Wonderland*—because "the world is too much with us."

I have cross-examined my friends, and I find there is not an item that has not some fan. The second violin in our quartette listens to the football results—than which it is difficult to imagine anything more dull. He has to negotiate with his family when one of the programmes has a symphony, and the other has a variety hour, as to which should be tuned in; although why anybody should want to listen to variety I can only conceive by a process of abstract logic. My wife (to my surprise) likes the debates. Among the most widely popular items I believe would be found such things as the Trial of the Flitch and that bear-garden debate broadcast a few months ago, called the War of the Roses. Plays command too much attention: they should be prepared for by stoking up the fire, lighting the pipe, and putting every rival activity aside. And time is too urgent for that.

I spend my summer holiday in the loneliest part of England I can find—without the wireless. It is with the friendly feeling, when I get back, that I turn it on to the first item that happens along: there is something cheerful about the B.B.C. that appeals in itself, irrespective of what the programme happens to be.

But next door they have a set that brings in the Continental stations. And when, following that infernal fanfare, I'm told I shall hear "Caro Mio Ben" by the enterprise of Pink Pills Ltd. (these beautifully coloured pills are guaranteed to cure all irritation of the scalp, constipation and pimply skin—to be obtained from any chemist—ask for *Pink* pills)—I feel that Fleming, the genius who invented the valve, has given civilisation a real stab in the back.

The B.B.C. are planning a special film of *How Christmas is Spent all over the Empire*. For the purpose of this film, which is to be televised on Christmas Day, Major E. G. Barbrack is ransacking film libraries for cuttings suitable to construct the film on how Christmas Day is celebrated in all parts of the British Empire.

B.B.C. Events

Friday, Jan. 1st, 8.30 a.m.: Third Test Match. Commentary from Melbourne. NATIONAL. 4.0 p.m.: *The Four Winds*. New Year's Day in the four corners of the earth. Production: Pudney. REGIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: Lauri Wylie's Wireless Puppets. Production: Kester. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Jan. 2nd, 7.30 p.m.: *In Town Tonight*. Production: Hanson. NATIONAL.

★Sunday, Jan. 3rd, 5.35 p.m.: *Much Ado About Nothing*. Shakespeare. Production: Creswell. NATIONAL.

Monday, Jan. 4th, 9.35 p.m.: *Money with Menaces*. By Patrick Hamilton. Production: Sieveking. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Jan. 5th, 7.50 p.m.: Carroll Levis and his Discoveries. NATIONAL.

★Wednesday, Jan. 6th, 9.20 p.m.: *Twelve Months Back*. A Review of 1936. Production: Gilliam. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Jan. 7th, 9.0 p.m.: *Snapdragon*. A burlesque pantomime by Ashley Stern and A. A. Thomson. REGIONAL.

★Saturday, Jan. 9th, 8.55 p.m.: *Figaro*. Act 2. From Sadler's Wells. REGIONAL.

★Sunday, Jan. 10th, 9.5 p.m.: *Lady Windermere's Fan*. Wilde. Production: Gielgud. NATIONAL.

Monday, Jan. 11th, 7.20 p.m.: *Entertainment Parade*. Production: Watt. NATIONAL. ★8.30 p.m.: *Man of Destiny*. Shaw. Production: Burnham. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Jan. 13th, 7.45 p.m.: Symphony Concert. Conductor: Malcolm Sargent. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Jan. 14th, 9.30 p.m.: Harringay *v.* Resident Canadians. Ice Hockey. Commentary. REGIONAL.

Friday, Jan. 15th, 8.0 p.m.: Music from the Movies. NATIONAL. 9.40 p.m.: *Invitation to the Waltz*. Production: Maschwitz. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Jan. 16th, 2.20 p.m.: England *v.* Wales. Rugger. Commentary from Twickenham. NATIONAL.

Sunday, Jan. 17th, 7.20 p.m.: Feature Programme. *American Humour*. NATIONAL.

Monday, Jan. 18th, 7.30 p.m.: *The Runaways*. Eden Phillpotts. REGIONAL. 8.45 p.m.: Snooker Match. Davis *v.* Lindrum. Commentary from Coventry. REGIONAL.

Tuesday, Jan. 19th, 7.45 p.m.: Liverpool Philharmonic Society Concert. Bruckner, Sibelius, Mozart, Vaughan Williams; conductor, Wood. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Jan. 20th, 8.0 p.m.: *Bianca*. Musical Drama. Production: Kester. REGIONAL.

Thursday, Jan. 21st, 9.0 p.m.: *Scrapbook for 1922*. Production: Brewer and Baily. REGIONAL.

Friday, Jan. 22nd, 4.0 p.m.: *Butter wouldn't suit the Works*. Programme about clocks. Production, Pudney. REGIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: Feature Programme: *Shepherd's Meet*. REGIONAL.

Sunday, Jan. 24th, 9.5 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Doctor Johnson*. Production: Felton. NATIONAL.

Monday, Jan. 25th, 8.30 p.m.: Burns' Anniversary Programme. REGIONAL. 9.35 p.m.: *Twenty Years After*. Dumas. Production: Creswell. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Jan. 26th, 8.0 p.m.: *A Southern Maid*. Musical Comedy. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Jan. 27th, 8.15 p.m.: Concert from Queen's Hall. Conductor: Boult. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Jan. 28th, 8.15 p.m.: ★Royal Philharmonic Society Concert. Mozart. Conductor: Beecham. REGIONAL.

Friday, Jan. 29th, 8.20 a.m.: Fourth Test Match. Commentary from Adelaide. NATIONAL. 8.20 p.m.: *Paradise Island*. Hawaiian Feature Programme. REGIONAL.

Saturday, Jan. 30th, 8.50 p.m.: Act 2 *Barber of Seville*. From Sadler's Wells. REGIONAL.

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Amateurs Can Perform Great Public Service says John Grierson

MANY organisations are to-day interested in propaganda by film. The Government gave an authoritative lead eight years ago when it set up the E.M.B. Film Unit, but, before then, some of the big industrial companies like United Dairies and Dorman Long had made a beginning. To-day more than a hundred of the great industries and Government departments are making films. A new brand of film producer has arisen. These film producers of the quickly developing non-theatrical cinema include firms like Beechams and Amami, interests like Gas, Electricity and the Railways, towns like Brighton, counties like Lancashire and national organisations like the Travel Association.

These people have a great deal of money at their disposal for propaganda purposes—some of them hundreds of thousands of pounds a year—and they are not likely to come to the amateurs for their films. A few have their own production units—for example the G.P.O. Film Unit, the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, the Travel Association Film Unit and the Shell Film Unit. Most of them get their films made through specialist film producers like Gaumont-British Instructional, Strand Films, Publicity Films, Revelation Films, and others.

But the amateur will soon be playing a huge part in this field. Every year a great number of requests for advice come to me and they come from people who have not got the resources of the big groups but have nevertheless important messages which they wish to convey by film to the public. Hospitals want to tell about their work and appeal for money. Education authorities want to make local films to fit into their curriculum. Causes like the National Trust and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England need increased support and must tell their story if they are to get it. These industries, towns, causes and organisations which lack money and have only their own excellence to recommend them, are the opportunities of the amateur. The professional cannot help them because he would cost more than they can afford and the professional minimum of say two hundred pounds is in many cases out of the question. But give as little as fifty pounds to the amateur and he will work wonders.

I would like to see amateurs all over the country searching out and finding these fifty pound opportunities. Local authorities and social causes of all sorts need their help and could provide enough money to work with comfortably under amateur conditions. The amateurs could be the greatest production group in the country—making as many as a thousand serious films a year—if this alliance with local work and social service were effected.

This is not, after all, just a dream of mine. It is on a small scale a present reality. The partnership between the amateur and the local authority has already been struck. It has grown spontaneously from the need for propaganda by film, the civic ardour of many amateurs and the financial limitations of the authorities concerned. The Glasgow Education Committee has a film unit which has done excellent work in the production of classroom films. The films are shot and edited by the teachers themselves. In Edinburgh a really fine amateur—Kirkness—is following the Glasgow example and setting up a production group for the local schools. In Preston a bargain was struck between a local amateur group and a local industrial undertaking. I have seen many valuable amateur films made under similar circumstances, sometimes financed privately, in many cases financed by the organisation involved. Films of industry like *Cement*, which last year won the Savile Cup and the film on *Forestry*, which this year won the I.A.C. award—films of hospitals and surgical operations—films describing the work of schools and films describing political and social issues. At Liverpool the Tatler Cinema runs a local amateur newsreel on 16 mm.

It is nonsense to say that this public work is too great a responsibility for amateurs. The quality of amateur films to-day is very high indeed and at its best not very different from professional. I was astonished last year when I adjudicated the entries at the Glasgow Amateur Film Festival, by two facts. The first was that a large proportion of the films represented a serious contribution to public education. The second was that all the amateurs concerned had long passed the back-garden stage of development, had learned to photograph and were learning to edit—and that they were in fact really and truly concerned with the making of *film*.

Recently I have been trying to mobilise some aid for this important new movement. Professional directors have been asked if they would be willing to help amateurs in the production of these public interest films. The idea is that I, for example, would make myself available to say the Maidstone or Edinburgh group, help with scenarios if I am wanted, give a hand in cutting if I am wanted and, in general, make myself as useful as possible. This indeed I would gladly do and for nothing—so long as the films are not personal and back-garden efforts but honest efforts in local welldoing. Already a dozen other professional directors have expressed their willingness to join me in the offer.

I have heard only one word against this plan for amateurs. I have heard one professional say: "Why should we help the Amateurs? Why should they make films for educational authorities and public organisations? They will be making films which might otherwise come to us." This is a silly and short-sighted reaction. It is silly because it is only the amateur that can use those small fifty-pound sums of the less wealthy organisations. It is short-sighted because the amateurs will do much to make public interests film-conscious; and as they learn to use films they will almost certainly want to use them more ambitiously.

Well, there is my plan and I know that many amateurs over the country will agree with it. After all, I am only asking amateurs to take themselves seriously as film workers—and what amateur does not want to turn his hobby into an instrument of public usefulness?

Broadcasting in Cinemas

Western Electric announce that they have made arrangements with the Relay Services Association, whereby broadcasts can be relayed in cinemas equipped with Western Electric sound.

There has lately been a growing demand to relay in cinemas and in the majority of theatres this has meant coupling up radio relay services or wireless sets to the sound equipment. Owing to the large variety of wireless sets considerable difficulty has been encountered in making a satisfactory hook up.

Western Electric engineers and the radio relay engineers have now devised protective apparatus which entirely eliminates any possibility of indirect electrical interference from the relay service with the sound equipment. The Radio Services Association, whose address is 23 Bedford Row, W.C.1, will be glad to put exhibitors in touch with local relay companies, who will give them full particulars of the new arrangements.

Tickets please!

Write or telephone to-day for your tickets for the special screening of 10 outstanding 1936 publicity and propaganda films, at the Palace Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1, at 3 p.m. on Thursday, January 14th, 1937. (90 minutes programme).

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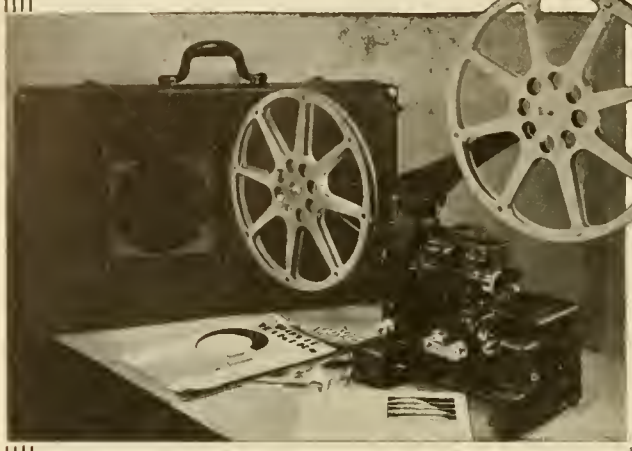

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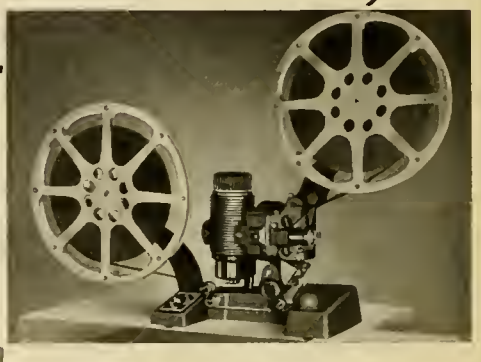

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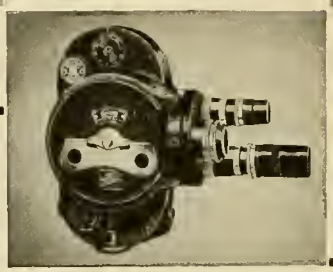

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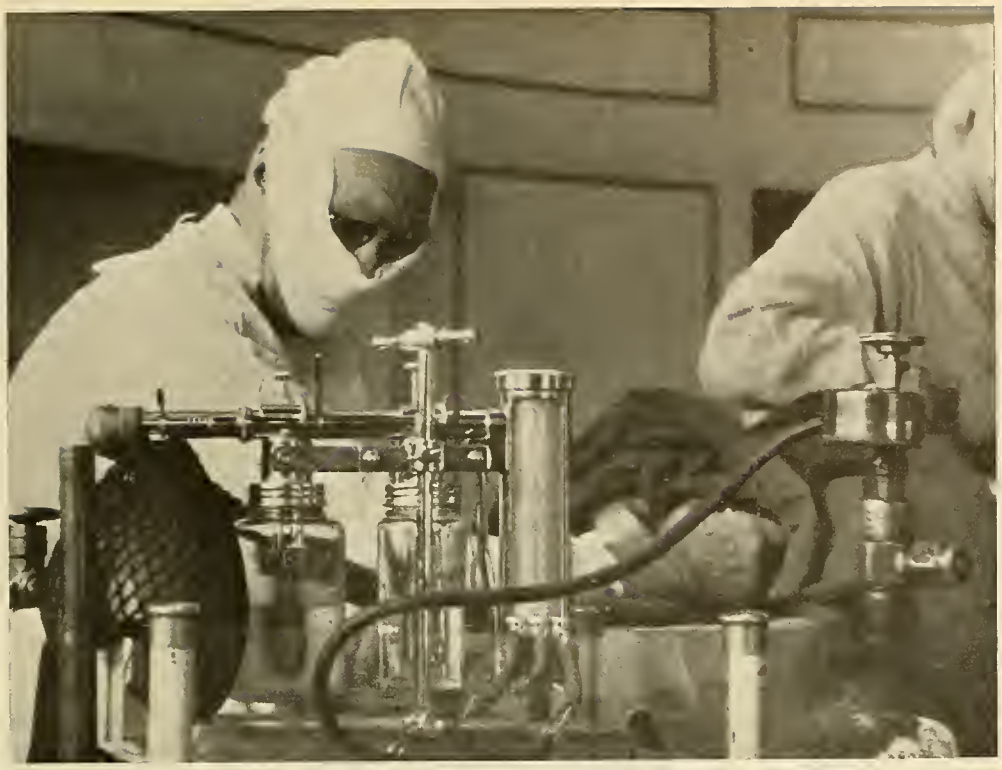

"Key to Scotland" (*Strand*)

In the Hands of the Doctor

"There are an infinite number of ways in which cinematography can be of use in medical research"

Says Peter Gorer

A FEW YEARS AGO I was present at the semi-private showing of a film of a Cæsarian operation. As a thriller the film was an undoubted success (several women fainted) but its scientific value was considerably less than that of the Surrealist film that followed. Cæsarian operations are frequently performed; anybody with a professional interest in them can see them in the flesh as often as they wish. There are special cases in which films of surgical operations can be very useful, but surgical skill can only be obtained by surgical practice, and in general such films are simply shockers.

There are of course an almost infinite number of ways in which a cinematograph can be useful to research workers or teachers, but for present purposes we may confine ourselves to three types in which the cinema appears useful.

The first is the analysis of movements too rapid to be analysed by ordinary methods. The use of the slow motion camera is too well known to require much amplification. We may point out that for certain types of biological problem this method is unsuitable because many cells and organisms are unable to withstand the intense illuminations necessary.

The antithesis of the above problem is the analysis of processes *too slow* to be followed continuously. It was the work of the late R. G. Canti in this field that did so much to popularise the cinema in biological research. For the first time it was made possible to follow the changes in form of cells from human brain tumours and to gain some idea of the life cycle of an ultra microbe. It is not possible to give a list of the problems for which Canti's technique has and can be used. Unfortunately the apparatus is bulky and comparatively costly. Doubtless, in time such apparatus will become part of the standard equipment of any up to date institute.

The third type of problem is that of recording events difficult to repeat. It is probably necessary to make the above statement clear by means of examples. Films were made of various cases of shell shock in which there were disorders of movement. Some of these showed interesting similarities to certain well-known nervous diseases of organic origin. Thanks to the cinema we shall be able to compare the neuroses of the last war with those of the next.

Some years ago the cinema could have settled a scientific controversy. It was discovered in this country that the secretion of digestive juices by the pancreas was controlled by a chemical substance that circulated in the blood. Ivan Pavlov (of conditioned-reflex fame) maintained that stimulation of certain nerves could also cause the secretion. This statement was disbelieved for many years because only Pavlov and one or two of his pupils were able to perform the experiment. Others have now acquired the technique, but it is in cases such as this that a cinematograph record would be invaluable.

The cinema is beginning to be used for teaching purposes in medical schools. One of its principal uses will be the demonstration of experiments that are difficult to show frequently. In these cases the students are not expected to be able to perform the experiments; it is merely desirable that they should see the results.

Recently I saw such a film demonstrating the physiology of the brain. The experiment requires a considerable amount of technical skill and is fairly costly to perform. Good though this film was, one could not help thinking how much better it might have been with a few technical improvements which would have suggested themselves at once to any experienced camera man. The animal upon which the experiment was performed was placed on a white background when one of black velvet could have been used and would have shown up certain movements very much better; for certain purposes close-ups would have been very advantageous and the camera not always in perfect focus.

For the most part scientists will probably wish to make their own films, whether these be for teaching or research. The experienced teacher knows just which features of a given experiment he wishes to accentuate but he may not know the best way to do so. Alternatively a research worker may wish to have a cinematograph record of some particular process but may not wish to spend a great deal of time and money on learning how to make a film. For both these problems an experienced technician would be invaluable.

A magnificent Film Service now available for Schools—

WHEN the use of Films in Schools was first broached, a number of difficulties had to be overcome. First, there were comparatively few films really suitable for use in schools. Secondly, the cost of projectors placed them beyond reach of most schools. Thirdly, there was the difficulty of persuading local authorities to provide funds for either projectors or films.

FILMS

The first difficulty has been overcome by the publication of the comprehensive list of educational films issued by Educational and General Services. These films, which are drawn from many sources, cover Geography, History, Nature Study, General Science, Physiology, and Handicraft, and can be fitted into a scheme of work for any type of school. They can be purchased outright or hired at moderate fees.

PROJECTORS

By universal agreement the 16 mm. film has been adopted because it fulfils the needs of schools and meets the regulations that govern the exhibition of films in schools. Projectors have been produced by a large number of manufacturers at a wide range of prices, some for sound, some for silent films, and others for both. It is also possible to secure a projector for use with both 16 mm. and 9.5 mm. films.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE SCHOOLS SOLVED

Until now the real problem has been the expense of installing suitable equipment, but this difficulty has been considerably minimised by the subscription scheme for films and equipment which has been devised by Educational and General Services of which full particulars will be sent on application.

E.G.S. give unbiased advice to any school with regard to the best apparatus and how to secure a really first-class installation. They will give free instruction for operating the machines so that the best results are obtained and will supply a regular programme of films, silent or sound, to suit the particular needs of the school. All E.G.S. films have been made by the Teaching Profession for the Teaching Profession for inclusion in the school curricula.

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WEST HAM'S YOUTH WANT SNAP & ACTION

IN THE PLAISTOW ROAD, among the grey wastes of West Ham, there is a little cinema called the "Endeavour."

It is the only cinema run entirely for children in London and is a commercial proposition, paying its way out of the twopences and threepences of its patrons. Miss Doris Hilditch is its pioneer owner. She took it over about a year ago when the building of super cinemas in the district had left it derelict.

At first she showed only silent films, but the children demanded talkies and got them. The house has been crowded for most performances ever since.

A great deal of its popular success is due to the sympathetic management of Mr. Harvey and to the local knowledge of his right-hand man, young Ronnie Woods, the re-winding boy. Ronnie was a regular patron who, wanting a job when he left school, was snapped up at once as a likely lad, one whose personal contacts in the district would be invaluable.

Visiting the Endeavour the other day I found that he and Mr. Harvey are in close touch with their audiences and know just what films and stars are liked and why.

"The children are very discriminating," said Mr. Harvey, "often more so than their parents, as they are not led away by preconceived ideas and glamour, but demand good straightforward stories put across quickly and snappily. They come and discuss the pictures with me and often criticise them most acutely."

"Do they take an interest in what's coming and decide whether to see it or not?"

"Indeed they do. We throw the names of coming attractions on the screen each performance. A small boy came to me with a worried face one day and said, 'When are you going to put on that film you are always mentioning, "Chocolates may be had from the attendants"? I think it sounds a good one!'

"The stills outside bring in the children, too. They study them for ages, then come and ask me about them. The girls flock in for musical and romantic films. *Mrs. Wiggs* went down marvellously with them. The boys come for comedy and adventure. *Bengal Lancer*, *Treasure Island*, *Home on the Range*, are what they like. Cowboys are rather stale now, but pirates are the thing. They like films with other boys in them—Jackie Cooper and Mickey Rooney are great favourites. Also the broad comedians, Laurel and Hardy, Schnozzle, W. C. Fields, Leslie Fuller, the Marx Brothers, and Joe E. Brown.

"Boys and girls alike love *Our Gang* comedies, while *Emil and the Detectives* had record houses. We are getting hold of it to show again. For our Christmas holidays programme we are having *Captain Blood*, which will fetch all the boys, and Shirley Temple's *Bright Eyes* for the girls. But boys like Shirley very much, too, which is surprising in a way. I believe popular sentiment has a lot to do with it. They hear their parents rave about her, and such admiration is infectious."

"Racing subjects are very popular—probably because racing is a great interest in this part of the world. Newsreels on the other hand are merely tolerated; they don't mean much to the children. *Silly Symphonies* have as much drawing power as the feature, and we always bill them as big."

"Environment has a lot to do with the children's attitude to what they see. . . ."

"Yes, it does. I overheard two boys talking about a scene in which an empty charabanc ran away down the hill. 'It's empty,' said one; 'No, it's full of invisible men,' said the other, 'and they're standing up hanging on to the straps as hard as they can.' "

"How long are your programmes?"

"Only one and a half to two hours. They get restless and bored if they have to sit still any longer. We show a feature, newsreel, cartoon and interest film—probably from G.B. Instructional. If they don't suspect they are being 'educated' they love such films, don't they, Ronnie?"

"Yes, for one thing there may be something to do with their hobby in them . . . trains or flying or something. I like these films if they aren't too long."

"Do the same children come in to see a film more than once?" I asked.

"Many times, if they like it," answered Mr. Harvey. "And we have a few old ladies who come several days a week as a regular thing. I think they find the young laughter and excitement infectious."

"Are they allowed in without a child in attendance?"

"Of course. . . ."

WINIFRED HOLMES

"A Business not a Crusade"

Exhibitor suggests a practical solution to problem of entertainment films for children

Kenneth Nyman

in an address given at the Film Institute's Conference

I RUN SPECIAL shows catering for some 1,600 to 2,000 children weekly. I did not find them consistently profitable until by experiment I arrived at a rough formula for the programmes. The children are very poor and come from the L.C.C. schools in Bethnal Green, Notting Hill and Commercial Road, and their ages are from 7 to 11. I shall continue these performances as long as they remain profitable. If I can improve the standard of the shows and maintain the attendances, well and good. But if I am to be persuaded I ought to modify the type of programmes to include, say, religious, uplift or educational films, then I am not interested and refuse to take the onus of moral, social or educational work; it is not my job and I am not paid for it. I stress this purely commercial aspect deliberately although it may sound sordid. Alistair Cooke, the B.B.C. critic, said recently: "Movies are a business, not a crusade."

Films not desirable for programmes such as I run are: "A" certificate films; features longer than one hour (the ideal length is 45 to 50 minutes); anything which is a reminder of a school lesson, e.g. *Rhodes of Africa* or *Livingstone*; films that depend on a good deal of singing (opera or jazz) or on spectacular back-stage sets. Films of the classics are not necessarily good children's entertainment because they are the classics, nor are films in which action is subservient to dialogue. The appeal must be visual and not aural. (I am sure the notable fall in children's attendances when silent films learned to speak was a case of cause and effect.) Society dramas and films in which child actors are namby-pamby or girlish and wear Victorian or old-fashioned clothes (e.g. Little Lord Fauntleroy) are also unsatisfactory.

Fairy stories are not generally popular with children. Pictures of ogres, giants, skeletons and 'big bad wolves' seen and heard so realistically are more frightening than entertaining. Love stories are of little interest and jungle or travel films should be avoided.

In my opinion Disney's Silly Symphonies are wasted on child audiences. Mickey Mouse cartoons may be the ideal example of what adults think children ought to like, but as genuine child entertainment they are over-rated. Certain of the cartoon characters are certainly appreciated; among them, Donald Duck, Oswald the Rabbit and Popeye the Sailor. The Disney subtleties pass over the heads of children and his preoccupation with enormous spiders, ogres, etc., frighten, while his Rabelaisian moments convey little or nothing to them.

As for short films, it is best to avoid silents as the present-day youngster is quite bewildered by what to him is the odd technique and miming of the silent film. In my opinion children do not understand Chaplin even though they yell at his antics.

The most popular films for children are full of action and have as basic themes heroism and achievement. They like films about bridge builders, aeroplane pilots, police heroes, firemen, railway drivers, cowboys, daredevil motorists, acrobats and boxers. Sure winners are animal pictures and they like circus, rodeo or Western subjects.

These remarks prefaced a paper read by Kenneth Nyman, chairman of the London and Home Counties Branch of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association at the recent Conference on films for children organised by the British Film Institute.

The conference was called to discuss a practical basis for a service of entertainment films suitable for children. Many members of the trade and of educational and social service bodies were present. Mr. Nyman suggested that a big film organisation controlling technical, renting and theatre facilities should undertake the assembly or six experimental programmes and that these programmes should be submitted to and approved by eminent psychologists, educational authorities and sociologists. The programmes should then be made available for showing. He pointed out that if such showings were encouraged by schools, run on a commercial basis and followed up by capable investigators, much would be learned about the type of programmes to aim at, and the economics of running children's matinees.

Eleven-Year-Old Chain-Smokers!

Paris Children's Cinema by Patricia Hutchins

SPECIAL FILM SHOWS for children have so far been left to private initiative in France. How much the State will do to organise children's cinemas lies in the lap of the political and financial gods. Uncertain deities at any time, now tightrope-walking over the strong current of social change profoundly affecting every phase of French life, and outlook, it is unlikely that any very sensational announcement will be forthcoming.

The Church has long ago realised the importance of directing attention to the choice of films for children and adolescents, and such an organisation as *Ciné Famille* extends its influence through the Roman Catholic schools and societies. *Bon Cinema*, which began by a series of film entertainments for the Orphan Apprentices of Auteuil, has enlarged its activities to public showings to which Parisians, and especially those living in that district, can bring their children "without risk of coming across immoral films." These are carefully selected and whenever possible seen by the organisers before exhibition, in other cases reference is made to the Catholic review *Choisir*.

The *Cendrillon Club*, which meets in the centre of fashionable Paris, is organised by Madame Sonika Bó and has a membership of about two hundred. For the past three years, weekly programmes have consisted for the most part of travelogue and documentary, several Mickeys, and entertainment shorts interspersed with musical items, dance and recitation competitions for prizes given by various firms as advertisement, followed by a short discussion of the films seen.

Whereas most of the efforts made have been to encourage an intelligent selection of films in the sphere of children's entertainment, Madame Aron, sister of M. Benoit-Lévy and founder of the *Ciné Club des Ecoliers*, has seen the cinema as the bridge between the child's imagination and the reality of the world in which he lives. For the past five years she has organised on Thursdays—French half holiday—shows for which neither the poorer school children nor the endowed schools and clubs pay entry: the remainder contribute a small sum towards the expenses for which Madame Aron holds herself responsible.

The shows are given in different parts of Paris at least once a month in cinemas carefully selected as regards ventilation, cloakroom accommodation, etc. The eight hundred to two thousand children attending any one performance, come from very different homes. At first Madame Aron and her helpers found that they had not only to combat the snobbishness of the well-to-do but control the unruly, among them chain-smokers of ten or eleven years old. There was often a feeling of resentment among the children at the idea of being separated from the grown-up world. "A programme for us? We'd rather go to the proper cinema!" was the retort on seeing the first announcement of the club's activities, but their interest and confidence gained, a friendly atmosphere was soon created.

Films are announced and sometimes commentated by the children. Although Walt Disneys and entertainment films are included, preference is given to straight documentaries, and the programme as a whole is always chosen to illustrate a central theme. Madame Aron adapts newsreels, cuts and rearranges most films and has made several especially for children. On the principle that it is essential to associate the film with the children's experience, films were shown which dealt with towns—Paris in particular and their own quarter whenever possible—and afterwards it was arranged that a number of children went on a tour of the city. Many scenarios were sent in for a film entitled *Life in Paris* which was eventually made, chiefly of extracts from films and newsreels.

The programmes which followed were on agriculture and rural life and the country in general, such as the film *Tour de France*, which is based on a familiar story included in the school readers, and showing the adventures of two children who travel through the different provinces. Then England and the neighbouring countries were explored and prizes given for the best answers to such questions as: "How would you get to London from your home?" I saw some interesting scenarios on the holidays written with infinite pains on lined copy books and illustrated by picture postcards and coloured drawings. In this way the children learn to select and piece together the basic visual material of film and learn something, however slight, of its construction.

With the development of these methods many variations have been introduced. Breton songs and dances, for instance, were given by the children after a film on Brittany had been shown. Emil Cohl, octogenarian inventor of the cartoon, talked to them; Antony Gross, co-director of *Joie de Vivre*, demonstrated how he made his films and Lumière passed in review forty years of cinema history, while engineers and other experts have added something personal to the interest of the films selected. In the cases of the *Maggi* propaganda film for milk, *Automobile de France*, dealing with the manufacture of Renault cars, and other films, through the co-operation of the firms concerned, the State railways and other authorities, a great many children have been able to see for themselves the processes described. At the same time Madame Aron owes much of the success of her efforts to the friendly help of both teachers and parents.

The sets of films have accumulated year by year and these are lent free of charge to settlements and other social activities. Talking of her work, which has always been with and for children, Madame Aron emphasised that the film was always a strain on the child, it demanded a response and an effort of concentration. The programmes for special shows should always attempt an ordered development of ideas and films be chosen with a view to the greatest simplicity possible. She has tried to make other people's surroundings and jobs *real* to them, to widen and clarify their world. She hopes that one day it will be possible to receive a party of English schoolchildren as guests of the *Ciné Club des Ecoliers*, and that French children should visit England and on their return describe their impressions to the other members.

"The film is necessary to complete education," she said. "We must do what we can but the cinema is still a luxury. The first problem is housing, decent conditions and good food, then we can think of films on a large scale."

Newsreel Rushes by the Commentator

CHRISTMAS FAIRY TALE. Amazing is the fact that the world should be discussing the biggest "International Gossip" story of the century without beginning: "Once upon a time there lived a Bachelor King . . .", so far removed from hard 20th century reality does the story seem to be. Since it first broke in the American Press months ago, grew rapidly from an echoing whisper to a blaring roar, listeners to American-fed tale-spinners in this country have changed their tune from a first "don't speak to me about it—it's all lies" tempo—through a "well, it does seem rather far-fetched"—into a "well, perhaps there's something in it,"—and finally to a "what are they saying now?" But few foresaw the shattering effect, when the news did finally break here.

With the entire British Press "ostriching," it was too much to expect the infinitely more cowardly newsreels to take an independent line. Interest therefore centred on transatlantic reports. Friends made on a fairly recent trip were commissioned as reel spies. It soon became clear that American Editors were itching to put out screen stories, were being balked by British Editors refusing, or not daring, to send material. With transatlantic cables sizzling with U.S. editorial curses, British Big-men at length relaxed their ban, sent cameramen to Ipswich for the Simpson divorce, only to have them sent back by the police. The only U.S. reel to recover from this stunning blow was Pathé News. A friend sent across the wording of the poster outside New York's Radio City Theatre: "England's American Queen. Pictures of King Edward and Mrs. Simpson bring Royal Romance to the Screen, as World discusses possibility of England's Bachelor King Marrying the former Baltimore Belle."

Pathé News' story contains only library shots of King Edward, the Duke of York's wedding, Mrs. Simpson's Baltimore home, Buckingham Palace, but no cinepictures of Mrs. Simpson, only still pictures of The King and she together, and of raving Press headlines. Considering the fever heat of U.S. columnists, the commentary was amazingly restrained. It ran something like this: "King Edward the Eighth, the world's most famous bachelor, has often been a best man, but never a bridegroom. When he watched his younger brother, the Duke of York, march to the altar, the King seemed pleased, but his own wedding march has yet to be written. To-day the American Press is filled with rumours of Royal Romance, coupling the name of King Edward with that of Mrs. Ernest Simpson, the former Baltimore Belle. As a girl, in Maryland, she lived in this quiet and humble home—to-morrow she may dwell in Buckingham Palace. The King and Mrs. Simpson have been pictured together on many occasions, and in this topsy-turvy world it may be the turn of an American woman to marry an English Monarch. Only one man knows the answer, and as yet he is keeping it a royal secret."

The final surge of the story into Britain's Press brought many a headache to reel editors. Libraries were ransacked for old royal films, hundreds of feet of old negatives were viewed, scripts were written, commentators thumbed synonym dictionaries for non-committing words, cameramen lurked in Cumberland Terrace. But to no purpose. Through all the first days of electric tension, no whisper disturbed the dull monotony of the nation's newscreens. Remarks heard on all sides: "What a final crashing condemnation of the men who claim the title 'NEWSreel' for their product!" "What waste of fine technique and perfect organisation, when every controversial story is regarded as a ticking bomb." "How will they ever hope to rise from the muddy rut of self-satisfied ignorance in which they now wallow!" The newsreel's action seems to be matched by the rumour of B.B.C. News Editor John Coatman hurrying to Downing Street, to receive his instructions as to what comment should be made in broadcast bulletins—but that is a "scandal" for George Audit to investigate.

* * * *

G.B.'s Emmott, speaking over St. Neots' quads' birthday party: "This is Michael, waiting for his dinner, and worrying about his distressed area."

* * * *

The March of Time strikes a new high with its story about U.S. rabble-rouser Gerald Smith. Here was breathless speed, action, the clash of personalities, the stimulation of controversy. Superb effect—during final sequence of Smith stumping the country, his raucous voice speaking over a shot of a train at speed, with the engine's siren blowing raspberries.

* * * *

So badly had the newsreels got the jitters over the Constitutional crisis that even when King Edward VIII abdicated, their specials were contemptible. None of them had the courage to face up to the issue involved and the attempt to use the Queen Mary angle plus stock shots of the new King to cover up their cowardice, impressed nobody. The crisis has clearly demonstrated that the newsreels are dependent upon and fearful of the magic word *authority* and that they are unable to fulfil their responsibilities to the public on an issue of domestic importance. When will one of the newsreels have the courage to break through?

* * * *

A 16mm. unit sent to Spain by a progressive film institute to film scenes of the Civil War, has just returned from Madrid with nearly 3,000 feet of material, including 400 feet shot in colour. Ivor Montagu is now editing the film which will be exhibited throughout the country.

The unit spent a week in Madrid and was under fire several times both in the front lines and in aerial bombardments in the city itself.

Graphic shots were secured of the disturbance caused by these bombardments and of the measures taken by the authorities to defend the town.

The unit spent some time with the famous International Column securing camera interviews with Ludwig Renn, Beimler (since killed), and the military leaders of the Government. The photographic quality of the material is excellent.

Filming a Farm

by Andrew Buchanan

This is the fourth of a series of ten amateur-tuition articles written for World Film News readers who are actively interested in amateur film work

Winter on the Farm *(G.P.O.)*

FARMS ARE ALWAYS popular on the commercial screen, both as backgrounds for rustic romances, and as purely "scenic" interludes, primarily because the majority of cinema-goers live in towns, and find the countryside refreshing to gaze upon. Furthermore, close-ups of pigs guarantee laughs, roses round the door make couples lean closer, and the upturned shafts of a cart in a turnip field at sunset, bring tears to the eyes of the grimmest documentalist; whilst jolly "Varmers" in immaculate smocks, symbolise the town's interpretation of country folk. Many people appear to think that farmers spend their lives squatting heavily on imitation antique oak settles, alternately drinking cider and sucking straw.

Holidays on farms, and drives into the country are planned as if foreign countries or primitive places were about to be explored, whereas town and country are interdependent, a fact clearly explained in Basil Wright's *The Country Comes to Town*, and it is upon this basis that the intelligent film on farming should be constructed. Therefore, the amateur director will do well to remove from his mind the conventional approach, which glorifies the old farm, and contents itself with superficial beauty, unless, of course, he desires to produce a purely pastoral sequence that is nice to look upon, but which reveals nothing about the subject.

We have seen too many "perfectly delightful" rural tableaux of artfully grouped milkmaids, cows' tails swishing in the foreground, and pigs shot from unbelievably low levels—of intelligence! But we have not learnt from such pictures that farming is one of the hardest and most responsible jobs a man can have, nor have we seen farms at work, day and night, summer and winter, to supply cities with essential produce, for only the brightest day in June is picked to shoot cattle browsing, through gauzes, and harvesters silhouetted against skies that are just a trifle too lovely.

Now the amateur director has, I hope, the time and the freedom to film farming as it really is, and so it is up to him to show the enslaved and somewhat hurried professional how to do the job intelligently. For this reason, I am most anxious to develop the right approach to the subject before dealing with technicalities, and if my foregoing remarks have succeeded in influencing him away from the usual approach to the countryside, represented by the fiercely filtered field, and the "Old Inne" interior of the studio, where yokels' faces are framed with crepe hair, and all are filled with a dreadful gaiety as they bang their pewter mugs on the three-ply counter, then I have achieved something.

It is interesting for the amateur to bear in mind that most farmers rise about 4.30 a.m. and frequently have to grope their way through fog to find their cattle—have to trudge, knee-deep, through sodden fields, search the hills for sheep in a wind that cuts like a razor, and sit up until midnight working out their complicated records and studying graphs which reveal their output of eggs. In other words they have to struggle and toil as only hardened folk can, in order to gain a living by supplying cities with produce. Needless to say, such hardships should not form the basis of a film, but they should be definitely referred to, so that the farmer shall be portrayed accurately—a mixture of scientist, agriculturist and accountant—instead of a lazy red-faced joker, whose vocabulary is confined to Eh, Ah, and Um.

When the milk is late in the morning, or there is a shortage of eggs, there is a suburban commotion akin to a minor revolution, but where do these commodities come from, and who knows of the vast system behind their delivery? Very few, and that is why filming farming is an important subject that should be tackled with understanding.

How should one begin? By locking up the camera in the attic, gripping one's pencil, sitting down somewhere beyond the reach of eager technicians, and methodically listing a series of scenes which shall, broadly, form the basis of the production. I should commence with a map of England, upon which a pointer would draw attention to the chief agricultural counties showing the large centres they feed, and then dissolve, fade, or otherwise change that map into a close-up of a particular county, in the heart of which lies the farm or area it is proposed to study. This introduction enables titles or commentary to explain the subject, and the interrelation of farms and cities, and should be followed by some dairy produce in shops—baskets of eggs labelled "New Laid"; slabs of butter and cheese; loaves of bread; and then some milk bottles being placed on steps. The farmer supplies these regularly, in quantities that the normal mind would find difficult to grasp, but it is the normal uninitiated mind that the producer is catering for, and so his film should reveal the work behind the systematic delivery of foodstuffs which are so familiar that one never bothers to think about them.

Now there is one difficulty about filming farming, arising out of the fact that each particular branch offers material for a feature film, so that it is not very simple to merge all of them into one production. Maybe, the amateur will decide to make several films, one devoted to poultry keeping, another to milk, and perhaps a third to bread, but, as an example, I am going to suggest he creates an impression of them all, beginning say, with eggs.

The display in the dairy might be followed with the hands of a farmer holding up the graph which shows him how his output stands, and this can merge into a comprehensive shot of poultry in portable houses. A few bold close studies of the birds feeding, eggs being removed from the nests, and a hen having medicine thrust down its throat, should then be intercut with a well-lit series of shots of a mechanical egg-grading machine, with its rotating spider arms that pick up eggs, estimate their weight, and drop them gently into their correct compartments. Modern poultry farming is a scientific industry, and whether it be electric incubation, or the mechanical sorting of eggs, the interdependence of town and country should be emphasised by alternate sequences showing the farm, the grader, and, if the director pleases, the dairy.

Similarly, milk offers countless opportunities for cross-cutting, as its history in brief proves. The amateur should make up his list from the following details. Modern conditions enable cows to be housed in immaculate, tiled houses, where their stalls are divided by chromium tubular fittings, and chains, and, in many instances, they are milked mechanically. Now that, in itself, is a most interesting sequence, but following the milking, giant road tankers, working to a rigid time schedule, supplement railways, by transporting huge quantities of milk through the

Filming a Farm (contd.)

night, to various distributing centres. Upon arrival, the milk is pasteurised and bottled mechanically, and simultaneously, used bottles are being washed. The machinery in these centres offers fine opportunities for the film-maker; gleaming tanks wherein the milk is pasteurised feeding rotating filling machines—lines and lines of bottles being conveyed to the fillers where they are whisked round, and off again, capped, and ready for delivery.

Back on the farm, the cattle are sent out to graze, and then more milking. Road tankers starting out again to the farms to return laden at night—a ceaseless, giant industry that is very different to the idyllic sight presented by a movie star in a large bonnet milking one cow, whilst chatting prettily to a ragged, though handsome shepherd.

Bread! Mechanical reaping—circular arms cutting the wheat is fine material, and then the parallel work of milling, and the wonders in the modern bakery, where huge mixers revolve whilst plunging arms pound up the dough. More harvesting in the fields, and then rows of loaves slowly entering ovens, and emerging from the other side, baked.

As I cannot hope to outline, in detail, a complete survey of this subject, I merely suggest a line of approach which should be clearly tabulated on paper before shooting begins. Naturally, it will be more lengthy and expensive installing lights in city bakeries, egg graduating rooms, and milk bottling stations, but the result obtained, enabling dramatic contrasts to be made, makes the job worthwhile, and unless the whole story is told the importance of the subject is lost sight of.

I advise the amateur to employ close-ups to magnify important details, whether it be the head of a hen as it pecks the ground, the figures on a graph, mechanical fingers gripping eggs, the big arm of the dough mixer, or the bewildered eye of the milking cow, for these register the essential character of the theme, leaving the audience in no doubt as to the importance of farming, and its relation to one's daily life.

Even if financial or technical limitations prevent one carrying out such a production, a great deal of good will be done by producing it in one's mind, for the essential point about making films is to be able to see a subject as it really is. If this is achieved, the actual film shot, though not as comprehensive as it might have been, will present a far more intelligent viewpoint than one shot by the man who has not grasped the fundamental importance of the subject. I repeat a point I have frequently emphasised—that if amateurs knew as much about the subjects they film as they do about the insides of their cameras, the results would be of greater value, for technical equipment alone can never create the perfect film.

The first essential is to study the subject; next, to plan it on paper; thirdly, to remove any items from the list which disturb continuity, and fourthly to shoot it so that the result shall not distract an audience by unnecessary camera eccentricities. Upon these lines filming farming can be a great experience for the amateur director, who should weave the natural beauty of the various locations he visits into his narrative, so that they embellish, but in no way dominate, the production.

(*G.P.O.*)

A Federation of Cine Clubs?

SO FAR, NO CLAIM appears to have been made by any existing amateur film club to be the oldest body of its kind, nor does there seem to be any record to tell us which was the original one. We do not know how many amateur film clubs there are in this country at the present time. All that can be said is that more clubs are coming into being, and going out of being again, than was the case a few years ago.

There are a hundred or so amateur film clubs on the unofficial roll at the present time. In twelve months time, many of them will have vanished, having accomplished nothing, and new ones will have taken their place, with every chance of meeting the same fate. Unless, of course, something drastic is done in the interval.

These clubs range from quite elaborate organisations owning property, running a studio, and requiring, but not always receiving, heavy subscriptions from their members, down to modest little groups that have nothing, not even a subscription. A few clubs are now several years old, have made films and thereby achieved publicity or notoriety; others have merely made films; the rest simply arrived, announced themselves, and gently disappeared.

The trouble is the inability of the film club to organise itself effectively in a way that will keep itself solvent and its members active, informed and instructed.

The bodies—interested parties, all of them—who have sought to do something to help the amateur club movement are, notably, the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers; the Royal Photographic Society; the British Film Institute; Scottish Film Council; *World Film News; Home Movies;* and one or two of the clubs themselves, such as the Meteor Film Producing Society and Salford Cine Society.

It seems a pity—to put it mildly—that so many separate moves should be being made towards the same end. If the amateur film club is worth saving, it will take the united efforts of all these interested parties to do it. What is wanted is an authoritative national body, representative of all interests, to co-ordinate the activities of the cine clubs; to form and control a federation of cine clubs; to be the paramount body governing the whole gamut of organised amateur cinematography. The same thing has been done in other circles—it is time it was done for the amateur screen.

There are bound to be difficulties in forming a combine of interests such as those mentioned, but they should not be insuperable, given a suitable constitution for this National Federation of Amateur Cine Societies. For it is not being suggested that the interested parties should abandon their present politics nor lose their present personalities—merely that part of their present activities be diverted. The N.F.A.C.S. would keep a register of all its member-clubs, of which there would be various categories, would control, suitably, the National Amateur Film Library; and would control the national film competitions, run on an elimination basis. It would indicate to clubs, when required, how to organise themselves for satisfactory continued existence, and be a guide to the whole amateur cine club movement.

I. S. R.

Amateur Cine Clubs

WIMBLEDON CINE CLUB: The winter programme was opened with a meeting to which members of seven London cine clubs were invited. A varied collection of films was shown, and a member of each society spoke on the amateur cine movement. Both A. Vesselo and Paul Rotha have given talks, and films from other amateur clubs have been shown and criticised by members. The last meeting in December was devoted to a talk and demonstration of "Kodachrome" by Messrs. Kodak. Secretary: C. W. Watkins, I.A.C., 79 Mostyn Rd., Merton Park, Surrey.

* * *

METEOR FILM PRODUCING SOCIETY: A series of short talks and displays of the Society's films have been given to various literary and social clubs and drama groups in Glasgow. The current production, *Fourth in Hand*, is rapidly taking shape, and all interior shooting has been completed. A list of the Society's films, which may be hired for display, can be had from the programme secretary, Ian S. Ross, 80 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1. The membership secretary is Miss Peggie L. Clark, 15 North Gardner Street, Glasgow, W.1.

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THE BECKENHAM CINE SOCIETY has been in existence for five years and has made eighteen films. Individual efforts by members have been shown as far afield as New Zealand. The film *Harvest Moon* has recently been awarded a certificate by the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain.

The Society meets every Tuesday and Thursday for projection and shooting, and visitors interested in the work are invited to The Studio at 5 Victoria Buildings, Beckenham Road. Associate membership costs 5*s.* per year.

Members of the Society are willing to give talks to Clubs and Societies in the district, on sub-standard film work.

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"I would burn the films as we used to burn the filthy newspapers."—*Mr. Lynch, at a meeting of Donegal County Council.*

"And I would buy you a box of matches."—*Mr. Gallen, at the same meeting.*

"Heart! Heart! Heart! and more Heart!"—*Eric Maschwitz.*

TOOTS PARAMOUR LAID TO REST

Extraordinary scenes were witnessed as the funeral cortège of Miss Paramour (late Studio Snooper of *W.F.N.*) wended its way to the Battersea Cats' Home. The coffin, made out of old film tins was placed on a simple camera truck (kindly loaned by Bullseye Productions Ltd.) and drawn by eight prominent gossip writers clad in deep morning dress.

A huge procession followed the hearse, including representatives of all the lesser known film companies, seventy ex-husbands of Miss Paramour, and innumerable rude urchins.

The wreaths were many and various, and included a vast bust of Gloria Musquash made out of Jerusalem artichokes (kindly loaned by Miss Musquash), and a reversed swastika of magenta georgette sent by Abe Maurdough.

As the coffin was being lowered into the Tabby cats' cemetery vault, a large car drove rapidly up, out of which stepped Guffenheim MacAndrew, Maisie MacMudd (noted film star), Juju Strumpp (ace director) and other notables. They were at once interviewed by W.F.N.'s reporter, who learnt that they had come along to see if it was really true. On being reassured on this point they left rapidly in a celebration party at the Monstrosity Bar.

* * *

Tributes to Miss Paramour continue to pour in. We give a few of them below.

JUJU STRUMPP: "She was a grand old pest, and if she hadn't bumped herself off someone would have had to do it."

SNOOKS GREISER: "So she couldn't take it, huh?"

EDITOR OF *W.F.N.*: "I anticipate a rapid rise in circulation."

MANAGER OF *W.F.N.* "Now perhaps we'll get some advertising."

GLORIA MUSQUASH: "Dear Toots, she died as she lived, and How."

ALBERT HALL (veteran actor): "She will be missed by us all. We can breathe again. But the last Toots will one day sound for us as well as her. Do not therefore delay your visit to the Superba, where my latest film *The Private Life of Thomas Aquinas* is playing to capacity. "

FROM OUR CASUALTY WARD CORRESPONDENT

Phillip Fluff, known as the World's Boy-Friend, who was accidentally knocked unconscious by a bottle during the Trade Show of his new picture, *Don't Tear It, Take the Piece*, is a little better, unfortunately.

ONLY MY FUN

She came—a star of great renown
From Hollywood to London Town.
She ducked the gangplank ballyhoo
And travelled third to Waterloo;
Avoiding all the station fuss,
She took a humble motor-bus
To some obscure and cheap hotel
(But one which did her very well).
She did not entertain the Press
In swanky suite and scanty dress;
She did not go to smart first-nights,
For her there flared no sashalites;
She did not trouble to lay bare
The details of her love affair,
She used no "swells" nor "wonderfuls,"
Nor eulogised our constables;
She worked for hours without a break
Upon the film she came to make.

* * *

Who was this paragon, this queen?
We do not know—she's never been.

THE SCENTED SECOND

I'm not very parshall
To Herbert Marshall.
He's always walking out into
a blizzard if he can
Leaving the little woman to
the other man.
Which, for the little woman,
may be wizard,
But is it quite fair to the
blizzard?

WEE JIMSY

A' THE road frae Thrums, wee Jimsy Barrie comes, fleein' owre the hoose-taps and blawin' doon the lums. Wi' a wish ablow ilk oxter, and kisses roond his thumbs—oh, Jimsy the Whimsy and his wee fairy chums!

There is glamourie and witchery and magic when he flees; a kilt made oot the stuff o' dreams, he wears aroond his knees; his belfry's fou o' baukiebirds, his bonnet's fou o' bees—oh, Jimsey the Whimsy and the muckle weird he drees!

There's gnomes ahint the ingleneuk, there's kelpies in the shed; there's sprites inside the aumrie, and elves ablow the bed; there's witches on their besom-shanks, and through the lift they've sped—for Jimsy the Whimsy on honcy-dew has fed.

—Macnib, *Glasgow Evening News.*

HINTS TO PUBLICITY WALLAHS

This is how they manage their posters in Ireland—

"Many's the head will be broken after the brawl, and many's the side will be aching after the howls and screams of this wild Irish nose-busting shindy."

Try this out, boys, on the advance publicity for Garbo's *Camille.*

* * *

The latest invention to come to my notice (remember last week I told you about the steam engine?) is a bowler hat made entirely of cellophane.

This is intended for use in cinemas and gives the wearer an uninterrupted view of the screen, which may not be such a good thing.

The idea is that every filmgoer takes one of these hats into the cinema with him and places it on the head of the man immediately in front of him. If there's a woman immediately in front of him that's just too bad. It means he's got to listen to her telling her friend just what's going to happen next in the picture.

As if he couldn't guess.

CONVERSATION—WITH APOLOGIES TO "PUNCH"

"Have you seen *Episode?*"

"Rather! I never miss a William Powell picture."

"Oh no—you're thinking of the American version of *Escapade*, with that new Austrian girl."

"Yes—Louise Wessely—and wasn't it called *Maskerade?*"

"No—that was the other one."

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO A SUPER-CINEMA

BY JOHN MILTON

Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge
Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound
Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a Temple, where *Pilasters* round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With Golden Architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or Frieze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n.
The Roof was fretted Gold. Not *Babilon*,
Nor great *Alcairo* such magnificence
Equal'd in all thir glories, to inshrine
Belus or *Serapis* thir Gods, or seat
Thir Kings, when *Egypt* with *Assyria* strove
In wealth and luxurie. Th' ascending pile
Stood fixt her stately highth, and strait the dores
Op'ning thir brazen foulds discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o're the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof
Pendant by suttle Magic many a row
Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed
With *Naphtha* and *Asphaltus* yeilded light
As from a sky, The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise
And some the Architect. . . .

(*Paradise Lost*, *I.* 710–732.)

LORUM

OF COURSE, THIS ISN'T TO GO ANY FURTHER

Sing a song of Press Shows,
Full of movie czars,
Five-and-twenty Press Men
Pocketing cigars.
When the show is over,
Nothing left to do
But go back to the office
and remembering that we
don't want to lose the
film companies' advertising,
write
a very
nice
review.

* * *

This month's Aureole of Birdseed goes to the noble folk of Drumbeg, Sutherlandshire, Scotland, for the following notice, prominently displayed on the seashore:

"NOTICE TO TOURISTS

Tourists are respectfully requested to refrain from profaning the Sabbath day by any recreation. By Local Request."

DAVE ROBSON says:—

As came the talkies, so cometh the colour, but what of the smellies?

I tried out such an effect in a surburban cinema a few years ago, during a run of *Drifters*. To heighten up the effect of the film I strung up one hundred herring in the air conditioning plant and started up the air intake at the commencement of the film. The natural sea breezes soon drifted to the auditorium, wherein a delighted audience were not only swayed by the visual effect of the drifters drawing in their catch, but went home with a good appetite for fish.

The following week, however, *Sands of the Desert* was featured, and I might add, under real tropical conditions, for not only were the patrons worried by a plague of flies, but their nostrils were irritated by a pugnacious smell as the camels trotted by under the Eastern sun. I had forgotten to remove the herring!

SNOOKS GREISER, *W.F.N.'s* unadulterated liftboy, encountered a certain C. Laughton in the lift the other day.

Snooks: So you're going to play the Emperor Claudius next, huh?

C. Laughton: Certainly.

Snooks: And Claudius was a cripple, huh?

C. Laughton: Yes, but——

Snooks: And small, huh?

C. Laughton: Yes of course, but——

Snooks: And very thin, huh? Well anyhow, you'll have to get rid of your Rembrandt whiskers because he shaved and hadn't much hair. Third Floor, Arts, Crafts, Basketwork, Poker work, Fretwork, Plasticine, and *World Film News*.

William Powell
Makes me howell,
But Myrna Loy—
Oh! boy!

"THE GREEN PASTURES"—1937

CHORUS OF VOICES: "HOW HEAVENLY! AT LAST WE HAVE BOTH FEET ON THE GROUND—"

Copyright, Vicky Publications.

A Year of Continental Films

by A. VESSELO

THE THIRTY-ONE feature-films which I have set out below according to countries of origin were all exhibited in London for the first time between December 1935 and December 1936. Seven had their first showing at the Film Society, eight at the Academy, eight at the Curzon, six at Studio One, and one each at the Forum and the Polytechnic. Although ten countries are represented on my list, it will be seen that one, France, contributes over a third of the total: in fact, in quality, as well as in quantity, the French films have led the way.

At their head, inevitably, comes *L'Atalante*, Jean Vigo's last film (now more than three years old)—the work of a man already inwardly foreshadowing death, and translating its odd displacements of human values into his own terms. *Merlusse*, directed by Marcel Pagnol, portrays with unaccustomed sensibility and insight an episode in the lives of a group of boys at a French Lycée: the atmosphere is reproduced so understandingly that one is almost transported to the scene. As for Feyder's *La Kermesse Héroïque*—declared to be the most successful Continental film shown in this country since the advent of sound—it has been overpraised, and its pictorial basis in the representations of classical painting establishes a dubious principle; but in its own field it is witty and accomplished, with the same anti-bourgeois sting as Clair's *Chapeau de Paille d'Italie*.

Bonne Chance is a neat and amusing enough little trifle, putting forward the versatile Sacha Guitry in every conceivable capacity, as scenarist, director, chief performer and what you will. Anatole Litvak's *Mayerling*, a dramatization of the suicide of Rudolph of Austria in 1889, stamps itself as romantic tragedy—sweetish, but above all emotionally dexterous. Then we have *Second Bureau*, a peace-time spy-melodrama, which illuminatingly shows us France and Germany as acknowledged enemies, and in which the virtues and defects of spy-melodrama are more or less evenly balanced; and from this point we proceed in order, *via* Edmond Greville's rather superfluous ingenuities, through competence, greater and less, to sentimental naïveté (*Sans Famille*), and from naïveté to the uninspired and unlikely entanglements of *The Phantom Gondola*.

After France, Austria follows with some appropriateness; for Vienna, in this between-wars generation, is the romantic Eldorado of all who travel in armchair-luxury upon the dark seas of the picture-house. And since this is so, it is presumably fitting also that Vienna herself should nourish the fantasy; so that out of seven films which she sends us, six are as fully as possible divorced from current realities. The seventh is *Die Ewige Maske*, made by Werner Hochbaum: a seriously-intentioned and carefully-handled study of temporary insanity as experienced by a young doctor in a Basle hospital. The remaining films fall only too easily into their categories. They are, respectively: an Orczy spy-tale (pre-war style); a tragic love-tale, set in a cosmopolitan nineteenth-century Paris inhabited chiefly by artists and dancers; a pair of 'gay Viennese' musical comedies; a somewhat outdated drama of misunderstandings; and an unspeakably mawkish and shoddily-constructed film of the Vienna Choirboys.

All four German films steer cautiously clear of actuality: three in fact are period-pieces. Of these, the melodrama *Savoy-Hotel* 217 is chiefly of interest as coming from those two capable craftsmen, Gustav Ucicky and Fritz Arno Wagner; but here craftsmanship is allied to something less than originality, and the result largely a reminiscence, occasionally halting and in mood not always pleasant, of earlier, more vital work. *The Student of Prague* is more chary as mysticism and in sum not half so compelling of the post-war silent version; and the operetta, *Letzte Rose*, sags off into complete boredom. *Reifende Jugend* gives us a flying glimpse of a swastika flag: beyond this, it seems to suggest that modern Teutonic youth, whether singing or ripening, is invariably maudlin.

In direct contrast to the films from Central Europe, both contributions from the U.S.S.R. concern themselves almost violently with present-day problems. That alone gives them an elementary strength and conviction which, whatever one's individual reactions, makes them difficult to brush aside. Even Ptushko's puppet-film, *The New Gulliver*, has political satire at its core; and from this undoubtedly—though in certain ways the satire is questionably apt—derives much of the film's fascination. Animation is imperfect; but any inadequacies of technique are dwarfed by those of Kuleshov's *The Great Consoler*, which is incredibly static and theatrical. Yet the fervent sincerity of the theme manages, one hardly knows how, eventually to penetrate; leaving us with an impression of the unsuperably bad and the intensely moving oddly and unevenly mixed.

Of films about childhood and adolescence, one of the better-made and more authentic is Poland's *Day of the Great Adventure*; though here an urge to capture the scenic beauties of the Tatra mountains under snow has been allowed seriously to impede the action. None of the other films listed is of first importance. *Fredlös* and *Janosik*, both excursions into the past, are fundamentally variations on the same theme, of the upright hero outlawed by a tyrant; and in each the virtues are mainly photographic. More consistently sombre, *Fredlös* is also perhaps less entirely conventional. *De Kribbebijter*, a comedy, is at least well-acted, if otherwise a trifle tedious. *Re Burlone*, our first importation from Italy for years, is notable for some efficient camera-work and nothing much else. Starting off lightly in Naples *circa* 1840, it develops a political aspect, and its final intentions are indecipherable. *Wedad the Slave* is said to be the 'first Egyptian talking-film.' It looks like it.

"Marchand d'Amour"

LIST OF FILMS

FRANCE	GERMANY
L'Atalante	Savoy-Hotel 217
Merlusse	The Student of Prague
La Kermesse Héroïque	Letzte Rose
Bonne Chance	Reifende Jugend
Mayerling	
Second Bureau	U.S.S.R.
Marchand d'Amour	The New Gulliver
Veille d'Armes	The Great Consoler
Anne-Marie	
Sans Famille	POLAND
The Phantom Gondola	The Day of the Great Adventure
AUSTRIA	DENMARK
Die Ewige Maske	Fredlös
The Emperor's Candlesticks	HOLLAND
Maria Bashkirtseff	De Kribbebijter
Liebesmelodie	
Sylvia und ihr Chauffeur	CZECHOSLOVAKIA
Hohe Schule *or* The Secret of Cavelli	Janosik
Singende Jugend	ITALY
	Re Burlone
	EGYPT
	Wedad the Slave

N.B.—The names are unfortunately half in English, half in language of origin; but that is due to the differing practices of the cinemas concerned.—A.V.

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETIES

WOLVERHAMPTON: On December 6th *Bird Sanctuary*, *Housing Problems*, and Len Lye's *Rainbow Dance* were shown to members. *Wings Over Everest*, *Chapter and Verse*, and the *Nutrition Film* have been booked for the January meeting. Secretary: J. N. Tomlins, Astolat, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton.

FILM SOCIETY OF AYRSHIRE: The programme given at the Broadway Cinema, Prestwick, on December 6th, included *Don Quixote* and *Der Hauptmann von Koepenick*. Mr. Colin McPherson lectured before the showing. Hon. Secretary: J. A. Paton Walker, 5 St. Marnock Street, Kilmarnock.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD: The aim of the meeting held on December 6th was to give two views of studio conditions, similar in their satirical basis, but contrasted in their national origin. *Once in a Lifetime*, an American film produced in 1932, was shown first, and was followed by *Marchand D'Amour*, a French film of 1935.

On December 20th the French school drama *Merlusse* is to be shown to the Guild. Four performances have been planned for 1937. Secretary: Douglas A. Donald, 16 Great King Street, Edinburgh, 3.

LONDON SCHOOLS FILM SOCIETY: Since its inception a year ago, this society has made valuable contacts with film producers and the manufacturers of sub-standard apparatus. It has been in active co-operation with the London Film Institute Society and the British Film Institute, and at the end of June had 112 members. The meetings have included discussions on the film in relation to the teaching of Geography, History, Nature Study and Hygiene. A producing unit of the Society has also been busy during the summer on the production of a silent teaching film. Hon. Secretary: F. E. Farley, 50 Ashridge Crescent, S.E.18.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY: This society seeks to use the medium of the cinema for the Church. As the Church is international, the society is trying to makes its work international. To do this the society aims at a Central Film Bureau, or International Film Pool, which will help to circulate Catholic sub-standard films throughout the world by arranging exchange of copyright. Enquiries have come steadily in from places as remote as Australia and the British West Indies and, nearer home, Ireland, France, Holland and Italy. These are being carefully filed, and it is hoped will form the nucleus of an organisation in line with the Pope's Encyclical on Films.

At the December display at Millicent Fawcett Hall, Rev. Fredinand Valentine. O.P., lectured on 'Liturgical Films,' the films shown were: *Dominican Mass*, and a Dominican Liturgical film. The address of the Hon. Secretary is 36 Great Smith Street, S.W.1.

STIRLING: A meeting of the Film Society was held in the Regent Cinema, Bannockburn, on December 13th. The feature film shown was René Clair's *Le Derniere Milliardaire* starring Paul Ollivier and Raymond Cordy.

THE LONDON FILM SOCIETY: At the first performance of the season the Society showed Ptushko's celebrated puppet film *The New Gulliver*, together with the American documentary film, made under the auspices of the Resettlement Administration, *The Plow That Broke the Plains*. On December 13th its programme included Georg Hollering's *Hortobagy*, reviewed in the December *World Film News*, together with two primitives, *Death Preferred* from the Cine Studios, and *The Beetle's Deception*, believed to be one of a series of Russian films made with real beetles by Professor Lozshki in 1912.

The next performance of the society will be held at the New Gallery Cinema on Sunday, January 10th, when the main film will be *La Tendre Enemie*, directed by Max Ophuls. Secretary: Miss Barbara Frey, 56 Manchester Street, London, W.1.

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY: The last exhibition for members during the Autumn Session took place on December 13th, when *Liebesmelodie*, *Mediaeval Village*, *Dawn to Dawn* and *Simple Charity* were shown—the latter being a ten-minute film of 1910, featuring Mary Pickford. The Society also did some valuable work during December by arranging two special matinees for children. The first was in conjunction with the local branch of the Modern Language Association, and the programme consisted of *Sans Famille*, starring Robert Lynen, *On Parade*, a Gasparcolor puppet film, *The Band Concert* (Mickey Mouse), and a three-minute diagrammatic film *Arabia and Islam*, with a French commentary. The second matinee, arranged with the co-operation of the Newcastle Education Committee, included *Bulldog Jack*, *On Parade*, *Krakatoa*, and *Night Mail*.

The society feels that the provision of exhibitions of specially selected healthy entertainment films for children is extremely desirable, and hope to arrange more matinees along these lines. The secretary is M. C. Pottinger, c/o Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY: *Moana*, a film of the Samoan islanders by Robert Flaherty, was shown to the society on December 20th at the Monseigneur News Theatre, Strand. The programme also included *Moscow*, a recent sound film directed by Tissé, showing the industrial development of present-day Russia; *Ether Symphony*, George Pal's new puppet film, made for Phillip's Radio; *Vormittagspuk*, an early abstract film by Hans Richter; and *Cut It Out!* a Brunel burlesque. Hon. Secretary, H. A. Green, 8 King's Road, N.4.

INVERNESS: After an opening performance on November 10th at the Empire Theatre, which included *Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns*, *Night Mail*, *Easy Street* and *Episode*, a second programme was given on December 10th. The films shown were *Fortress of Peace*, a French film which vividly describes the picturesque loveliness of Mont St. Michel, and recreates the atmosphere of mystery and legend which is its special attraction; *The Key to Scotland*, a photographic survey of Edinburgh, showing the historical, education and commercial growth of Scotland; *Magic du Fer-blanc*, a film of the canning industry in France; and *Bonne Chance*, a French comedy directed by and starring Sacha Guitry. Hon. Secretary: Mr. John Mitchell, Royal Bank Buildings, Inverness.

"Janosik"

Seeing Films in Strange Places

By Carlos Marsden

Ibiza

GERMANY, 1926.

We arrived at a very small village in the Black Forest after a twenty-mile walk in the pouring rain. It was summer, but cold in the hilltop pine-woods, and we were warming ourselves at a log fire in the inn and drinking Kirschwasser of vintage violence. About 9 o'clock a great tramping of feet resounded above us, a stream of people passed the door and clumped up the wooden staircase outside.

These were pre-Nazi days, and we happily followed the crowd. Upstairs was a large barn. In it, several rows of plain wooden benches, an upright pianola, and a vast piece of twisted metal which on closer inspection proved to be a hand-turned projector in the last stages of collapse.

The room was nearly full. The audience was composed of a few healthy-looking peasant farmers and their families, and a large number of semi-starved foresters and charcoal-burners from the wooded hilltops. It was still raining and steam rose from everyone. No one talked much, and several of the children were already asleep.

We paid about 2*d.* for the edge of one of the back benches, and waited in some excitement to see what the film would be.

The rain dripped incessantly. The room smelt of wet clothes. The screen (a patched sheet) flapped uneasily in the draught.

A very, very old man came in, staggering beneath an immense pile of film tins. These he placed on the floor by the projector, and then tottered across to the pianola. After a sharp tussle, he succeeded in starting it off with a torn roll of Liszt's *Liebestraum.* (We did not then realise that this opus was the entire repertoire.)

Meantime , with a backward lean and a twist of the head, we succeeded in deciphering the label on the top tin. We were about to see Fritz Lang's *Niebelungen*, in its entirety.

Meantime, the old man was trying to strike up his projector light. The film was inflammable, everyone was smoking and the only exit was half-blocked by the projector.

With the patience which only comes from long familiarity, the audience steamed quietly on the benches. We ourselves felt the greatest suspense.

Suddenly, with a whirr like forty threshing machines, the machine started. The old man wound the handle frantically and with obvious effort. The light was switched off suddenly—and the vast epic began.

When the pianola roll ran out, the aged projectionist, glad, no doubt of a rest from his monstrous crank-handle, stumbled across to restart it.

The audience remained outwardly unmoved. The children slept peacefully.

Between reels, or more often during a reel, when the film broke, we could hear in the distance the baying of the angry and wolf-like dogs who guard the farms and villages of that district. Their remote echoes contrasted violently with the pandemonium of the projector and the pianola.

Reel by reel the saga ran its course, scratched, torn and continually breaking.

At midnight we crept away to bed, but well into the night we could hear the clatter of the apparatus triumphantly drowning the pianola, and it was only in the early hours that the heavily shod feet stamped down the stairs, the projector slept, and the old man, freed from his slavery, crept exhausted to his loft.

A month later, we saw *Niebelungen* in a *de luxe* cinema in Heidelberg, but did not enjoy it half so much.

JAMAICA, 1933.

An open-air cinema, a 2,000 seater, equipped with the latest projectors, the finest arcs, an enormous screen.

The body of the hall, open to the stars, and unlit by any other means, crammed with negroes. At the back on a balcony, roofed in like the stand on a racecourse, the whites—superior, uncomfortable, and aloof.

In the distance, the toots of the cavorting taxi-hordes of Kingston.

The supporting programme is just over. The management attempt (they will never learn) to floodlight the auditorium during the interval. From the massed banks of negroes as the headlights fade up, comes a long hiss rising in a crescendo. Cinemas have sometimes been wrecked for this in the West Indies, where darkness is the main item in the price of a seat. The management caves in, the lights are switched abruptly off. The hissing stops. There are a few isolated bursts of laughter.

The big film begins. Charles Laughton and Claudette Colbert in *The Sign of the Cross.* A gleaming, brand new copy from the States. The acoustics are perfect. The high intensity arcs turn the stars pale. A warm breeze blows across the auditorium.

This is the apotheosis of Cecil B. de Mille. Hokum it may be to the starched business men in the circle, but to most of the audience this film is a deep and moving religious experience. An electric silence is broken by murmurs and groans. At the climax, an indescribable din rises from the negroes, and afterwards, in the light of the street-lamps at the exits you can see that many of them have been crying.

IBIZA, 1936.

Before the civil war and the Italian bombing raids this was the happiest of the Balearic islands, its inhabitants real tillers of the soil, and its foreign population of émigrés and escapists as happy and carefree as any English, French, Germans or Russians have any right to be.

There are, or were, two cinemas, both converted from charming period theatres, with a horseshoe auditorium lined with a double tier of boxes supported on graceful wooden columns.

The performance begins at 9, and by 9.15 several early birds have arrived and amuse themselves by shouting wisecracks at their friends as they come in.

By 9.30 the auditorium is moderately full. Raw recruits from the garrison (soon to take unwilling part in the rebel cause), girls from the town, rude boys from the street, a few gnarled old peasants from the nearby villages, freakish foreigners of all sexes, and local worthies, such as the local banker, who is also the head of the smuggling industry, the Commandante of the Garrison (who will be shot in August for treason against the State), the Chief of Police, and the horsey American woman who has lived here so long that she is regarded as a native.

Everybody knows everyone else, and everybody waves and nods and shouts and smiles.

At 9.55 a small section of the audience decides is is high time to make a start. They indicate this by catcalls, butcher-boy whistling, and by a rhythmic hand clapping which becomes quite alarming in its intensity as the rest of the audience takes it up. There is a good deal of laughter and everyone is happy.

Nothing happens. The process is repeated several times, with the utmost good humour, and finally at 10.20 the lights go down, and an aged Laurel and Hardy is projected. To English ears the fact that ordinary Spanish voices have been dubbed on to the comedians gives the film a fantastic and almost macabre atmosphere. The projector frequently breaks down. No one cares.

But the *pièce de resistance* is an Astaire–Rogers epic. At about reel 4 they do a Spanish number—brilliantly. In an access of joy and excitement the audience rises to its feet, demands an encore, insists on an encore. The projectionist, ever obliging, retires to his cubby-hole, rewinds the film, basking the while in the glory of his position as Chief Magician, and the reel is projected again amid scenes of indescribable enthusiasm.

You would never think that these people were about to be involved in the agonies of civil rebellion. Yet many of them are already dead—in violence, and suddenly.

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppet film in Gasparcolor).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Slatinay and George Pal.
CHESTER: Tatler News Theatre — Jan. 25, 6 days
GILLINGHAM: Regal — Jan. 25, 3 days
NEATH: Windsor — Jan. 4, 6 days
STOCKPORT: Alexandra — Jan. 11, 6 days
WAKEFIELD: Savoy — Jan. 14, 3 days

And So to Work (An original comedy of early morning).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Richard Massingham
ABERDEEN: Palace — Jan. 25, 6 days
BIRKENHEAD: Rialto, Bebington — Jan. 28, 3 days
Plaza — Jan. 18, 3 days
BRIDGWATER: Palace — Jan. 18, 3 days
DARLINGTON: Alhambra — Jan. 11, 3 days
DORCHESTER: Palace — Jan. 28, 3 days
GODALMING: Regal — Jan. 25, 3 days
GUILDFORD: Playhouse — Jan. 11, 6 days
HULL: Regis — Jan. 28, 3 days
INVERNESS: La Scala — Jan. 18, 3 days
KETTERING: Electric Pavilion — Jan. 7, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Empire, Garston — Jan. 21, 3 days
LONDON: Capitol, Wembley — Jan. 18, 6 days
SALISBURY: Picture House — Jan. 25, 3 days

Beside the Seaside (A film of South Coast resorts).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson
FALKIRK: Pavilion — Jan. 4, 6 days
LONDON: Studio Two — Jan. 25, 3 days
MIDDLESBROUGH: Pavilion — Jan. 14, 3 days
MOTHERWELL: Pavilion — Jan. 7, 3 days
STOKE: Hippodrome — Jan. 30, 6 days
WOLVERHAMPTON: Scala — Jan. 7, 3 days

Colourful Cairo (Travelogue).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
CHESTER: Tatler News Theatre — Jan. 25, 6 days
LONDON: Lansdowne, Berkeley Sq. — Jan. 7, 4 days
NOTTINGHAM: News House — Jan. 18, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Paragon — Jan. 11, 6 days

Community Life.
DISTRIBUTION: G-B.D.
PRODUCTION: G-B.I.
LONDON: Curzon — Jan. 1, indefinitely

Coral Island (A film of the Bermudas).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio
BRADFORD: Tennyson — Jan. 25, 3 days
BRIDLINGTON: Lounge — Jan. 28, 3 days
DOUGLAS: Picture House — Jan. 11, 6 days
LEEDS: Capitol — Jan. 21, 3 days
NORWICH: Capitol — Jan. 11, 3 days
ROCHDALE: Palace Tudor — Jan. 21, 3 days

Cover to Cover (A documentary of book production).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw
BIRMINGHAM: Gaumont Palace — Jan. 4, 6 days
West End — Jan. 11, 6 days
BRISTOL: Regent — Jan. 11, 6 days
CHELMSFORD: Ritz — Jan. 4, 6 days
COVENTRY: Gaumont Palace — Jan. 4, 6 days
DERBY: Gaumont Palace — Jan. 4, 6 days
GUILDFORD: Playhouse — Jan. 25, 6 days
LEICESTER: City — Jan. 18, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Casino — Jan. 11, 3 days
LONDON: Capitol, Wembley — Jan. 4, 6 days
Regal, Golders Green — Jan. 4, 6 days
Tower, Peckham — Jan. 4, 6 days
READING: Pavilion — Jan. 25, 6 days
SALISBURY: Picture House — Jan. 11, 6 days

Dragon of Wales (A travelogue which tries to tackle economic conditions).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard
DUMFRIES: Regal — Jan. 14, 3 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House — Jan. 21, 3 days

Dragon of Wales—*continued.*
ROCHDALE: Hippodrome — Jan. 7, 3 days
STRATFORD-ON-AVON: Picture House — Jan. 18, 3 days

Fire Fighters (Film of the London Fire Brigade).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Peter Colin
BIRMINGHAM: Pic. Hse., Northfield — Jan. 14, 3 days
BRIDLINGTON: Palace — Jan. 21, 3 days
CARLISLE: City — Jan. 4, 3 days
EDINBURGH: Regent — Jan. 4, 6 days
LONDON: Monseigneur, Piccadilly — Jan. 11, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Tower, Ancoats — Jan. 7, 3 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Adelaide, Benwell — Jan. 18, 3 days
NORTHAMPTON: Exchange — Jan. 7, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Hillsboro Park — Jan. 28, 3 days

For All Eternity (A film of English cathedrals).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson
AYR: Orient — Jan. 7, 3 days
BLACKPOOL: Rendezvous — Jan. 28, 3 days
DOVERCOURT: Regent — Jan. 25, 3 days
GREENGATES: Cinema — Jan. 7, 3 days
PAISLEY: Picture Theatre — Jan. 21, 3 days
PETERHEAD: Playhouse — Jan. 28, 3 days
SOUTHPORT: Trocadero — Jan. 17, 7 days
STOCKTON-ON-TEES Regal — Jan. 4, 6 days

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns (A retrospect of European events for the last 40 years).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: A. B. Svensk Filmindustri
ENGLISH VERSION: Donald Taylor
CHESTER: Tatler News Theatre — Jan. 4, 6 days
LEIGH (LANCS): Cinema — Jan. 18, 6 days
LONDON: World News, Praed Street — Jan. 14, 3 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House — Jan. 14, 3 days

Happy Hampstead (North London's playground, in many moods).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: R. B. Pearce
CRAYFORD: Princess — Jan. 28, 3 days
ERITH: Picture House — Jan. 28, 3 days

Heart of an Empire.
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson
BOLTON: Carlton — Jan. 25, 3 days
BRIDLINGTON: Lounge — Jan. 13, 3 days
LOOE: Pavilion — Jan. 7, 3 days

The Immortal Swan (Record of the life of Pavlova).
DISTRIBUTION: Ace Films
LONDON: Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road — Jan. 18, 6 days

Islands of the Bounty (Travelogue).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
ACCRINGTON: Hippodrome — Jan. 25, 6 days
CREWE: Empire — Jan. 7, 3 days
GLASGOW: Arcadia, Bridgeton — Jan. 21, 3 days
Kings — Jan. 14, 3 days
WARRINGTON: Grand — Jan. 28, 3 days

Key to Scotland (Edinburgh Documentary).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson
BIRKENHEAD: Super — Jan. 4, 6 days
BIRMINGHAM: Pic. Hse., Northfield — Jan. 28, 3 days
GLASGOW: Picture House, Parkhead — Jan. 14, 3 days
Princes, Springburn — Jan. 7, 3 days
Waverley, Shawlands — Jan. 7, 3 days
KETTERING: Electric Pavilion — Jan. 4, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Rivoli — Jan. 21, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Tatler News Theatre — Jan. 18, 6 days

Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
ASHTON: Majestic — Jan. 18, 6 days

Men Against the Sea—*continued.*
BRISTOL: Hippodrome, Bedminster — Jan. 18, 6 days
KESWICK: Alhambra — Jan. 15, 2 days
LIVERPOOL: Empress — Jan. 7, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Cosmo, Gorton — Jan. 18, 3 days
Rota, Reddish — Jan. 25, 3 days
Tower, Ancoats — Jan. 4, 3 days
OXFORD: Ritz — Jan. 11, 6 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews — Jan. 21, 3 days

Mickey Mouse.
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists
PRODUCTION: Walt Disney
Mickey's Circus.
LONDON: Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Rd. — Jan. 11, 6 days
The Alpine Climbers.
LONDON: Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Rd. — Jan. 4, 6 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the Travelling Post Office).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.
DIRECTION: Harry Watt and Basil Wright
PLYMOUTH: Virginia House, Palace St. — Jan. 8
SHIPSTON: Picture House — Jan. 28

Northward Ho! (A voyage round the coast of Norway).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: C. E. Hodges
CARLISLE: Lonsdale — Jan. 25, 6 days
COLCHESTER: Headgate — Jan. 7, 3 days
GREENOCK: B.B. Cinema — Jan. 25, 3 days
LEEDS: Tatler News Theatre — Jan. 18, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Tatler News Theatre — Jan. 21, 3 days
NORTH SHIELDS: Princes — Jan. 11, 6 days
WICK: New Pavilion — Jan. 11, 3 days

Living Jewels (The minute animals that live in the surf filmed for the first time).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio
BARNSLEY: Pavilion — Jan. 18, 6 days

Secret Hiding Places (A film of the many priest holes in English country houses).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Granville Squiers
BIRKENHEAD: Plaza — Jan. 25, 3 days
BRISTOL: Hippodrome — Jan. 18, 6 days
LEICESTER: Palace Theatre — Jan. 18, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Corona — Jan. 18, 3 days
Empress — Jan. 18, 3 days
Gaumont Palace — Jan. 7, 3 days
Magnet — Jan. 25, 3 days
Rivoli — Jan. 28, 3 days
WAKEFIELD: Empire — Jan. 18, 6 days
WOLVERHAMPTON: Queens — Jan. 21, 3 days

Secrets of Nature.
DISTRIBUTION: G-B.D.
PRODUCTION: Mary Field for G-B.I.
LONDON: Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road — Jan. 18, 6 days

Song of Ceylon (Documentary of Ceylon).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.
DIRECTION: Basil Wright
LONDON: Regent, Tooting — Jan. 18, 3 days
Wembley Hall, Wembley — Jan. 25, 3 days
OXFORD: Scala — Jan. 25, 3 days
SLOUGH: Palace — Jan. 4, 3 days
SOUTHAMPTON: Picture Theatre, Woolston — Jan. 18, 3 days

Trolley Ahoy (Colour cartoon).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio
PRODUCTION: Burt Gillett
DUNDEE: Palace — Jan. 11, 6 days
Plaza — Jan. 11, 6 days
EXETER: Empire — Jan. 7, 3 days

FILM GUIDE

Shorts (cont.)

HULL: Cecil — Jan. 18, 6 days
Dorchester — Jan. 18, 8 days
MORECAMBE: Palladium — Jan. 10, 7 days

Underground Farmers (The work of the ants in South America).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio
BOURNEMOUTH: Premier News — Jan. 11, 6 days

Under the Water (French documentary with unusual submarine photography).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Marcel de Hubsch
COLCHESTER: Regal — Jan. 25, 6 days
FOLKESTONE: Playhouse — Jan. 24, 7 days
GUILDFORD: Playhouse — Jan. 18, 6 days
HULL: Regis — Jan. 21, 3 days
Rex — Jan. 14, 3 days
Royalty — Jan. 4, 3 days
LONDON: Coronet, Camberwell — Jan. 28, 3 days
Regal, Golders Green — Jan. 25, 6 days
Regal, Wimbledon — Jan. 18, 6 days
Wembley Hall, Wembley — Jan. 28, 3 days
PORTSMOUTH: New Theatre — Jan. 31
UXBRIDGE: Savoy — Jan. 1, 2 days

Waif's Welcome (Colour cartoon).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio
PRODUCTION: Burt Gillett
CHESTER: Gaumont Palace — Jan. 4, 6 days
Music Hall — Jan. 4, 6 days
HULL: Carlton — Jan. 18, 3 days
Savoy — Jan. 14, 3 days
MORECAMBE: Palladium — Jan. 17, 7 days

Zambesia (A journey up the Zambesi by foot and 'plane).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: Rhodesian Film Productions
COMMENTARY: Alan Howland
BARNSLEY: Empire — Jan. 11, 6 days
BIRKENHEAD: Super — Jan. 11, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Casino — Jan. 14, 3 days
Rivoli — Jan. 4, 3 days
REIGATE: Majestic — Jan. 11, 6 days
WEYMOUTH: Regent — Jan. 18, 6 days

Advertising Films

On Parade (Puppet film in colour).
DISTRIBUTION and PRODUCTION: Gasparcolor for Horlick's Malted Milk Co.
DIRECTION: George Pal
BATH: Forum — Jan. 4, 6 days
BRISTOL: Embassy — Jan. 18, 6 days
GUILDFORD: Playhouse — Jan. 25, 6 days
HARROW: Coliseum — Jan. 18, 6 days
HASLEMERE: Rex — Jan. 14, 3 days
HULL: Rex — Jan. 18, 3 days
LONDON: Carlton, Acton — Jan. 4, 6 days
Granada, Wandsworth — Jan. 4, 6 days
Monseigneur, Leicester Sq. — Jan. 4, 6 days
Regal, Wimbledon — Jan. 18, 6 days
Savoy, Willesden — Jan. 4, 6 days

Foreign Films

Bonne Chance! (French comedy).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Sacha Guitry
STARRING: Sacha Guitry, Jaqueline Delubac
AYRSHIRE: Film Society — Jan. 10
HEREFORD: Film Society — Jan. 22

Ernte.
DIRECTION: Geza von Bolvary
STARRING: Paula Wessely
LONDON: Academy — Jan. 1, indefinitely

Fear (French drama of a waif in Paris).
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
DIRECTION: V. Tourjansky
LONDON: Curzon — Jan. 5, indefinitely

Foreign Films (cont.)

La Kermesse Heroique (French comedy of the seventeenth century).
DIRECTION: Jaques Feyder
STARRING: Francoise Rosay, Jean Murat
LONDON: Studio One — Jan. 1, indefinitely

Marchand D'Armour (French satire on the film industry).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Edmond Greville
STARRING: Jean Galland, Francoise Rosay
SCUNTHORPE: Film Society — Jan. 27

The Student of Prague (Austrian sound version of the famous silent film).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Arthur Robison
STARRING: Adolph Wohlbruck ..
Dorothea Wieck
LONDON: Regent, Tooting — Jan. 18, 3 days

Feature Films for January Release

Anthony Adverse (Warner Bros.)
DIRECTOR: Mervyn Leroy
STARRING: Fredric March.
Olivia de Havilland
Edmund Gwenn
Claude Rains

Broken Blossoms (Twickenham)
DIRECTOR: Hans Brahm
STARRING: Dolly Haas
Emlyn Williams

Bullets or Ballots (First National)
DIRECTOR: William Keighley
STARRING: Edward G. Robinson
Joan Blondell

Case of the Velvet Claws (Warner Bros.)
DIRECTOR: William Clemens
STARRING: Warren Williams

Counterfeit (Columbia)
DIRECTOR: Erle C. Kenton
STARRING: Chester Morris
Margot Grahame
Marian Marsh

Rhythm on the Range (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: Norman Taurog
STARRING: Bing Crosby
Frances Farmer

San Francisco (M.-G.-M.)
DIRECTOR: W. S. Van Dyke
STARRING: Clark Gable
Jeanette MacDonald
Spencer Tracy
Jack Holt

Show Boat (G.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: James Whale
STARRING: Irene Dunne
Paul Robeson

White Angel (Warner Bros.)
DIRECTOR: William Dieterle
STARRING: Kay Francis
Ian Hunter

Continental News

Among the films Jean Renoir has in mind is one of the French Revolution—for he finds that only by using a historical background can he adequately comment on modern political problems. Thus his film will include, as it were incidentally, analogies to the present day, from which the audience can draw its own conclusions.

He proposes to build up the film by a series of sketches rather than by a story, sketches of the secret traffics in arms of the time, of the sordid profiteerers, the capitalists, the aristocrats of France fighting in the army of the Emperor of Austria. He will show the Revolution from the point of view of the starving workman, storming the Bastille; he will only portray Louis XVI as, on the fatal day, sublimely ignorant of the wretched state of his rising subjects, he writes in his diary, "I shot a stag in the forest to-day. . . ."

Renoir aims at pointing out the humour and irony of historical situations,

This film—as yet untitled—is to end with the victory of Valmy and the *Marseillaise*.

* * *

Jean Painlevé, the instructional film director, has completed a film in Gasparcolor with the co-operation of Rene Bertrand, the sculptor. The story is taken from Perrault's "Bluebeard."

The figures used are modelled from "plastiline," a type of clay, and the movements are caused by a slight change for each shot, on the same principle as the "multiple" puppet films. The scenery and decorations are also of "plastiline," being modelled on thin wooden planks, as on a clay relief sketch. Sometimes the bright colours of the "plastiline" are painted over with gold and silver.

The film was actually shot on a large trick table, with a rounded heaven as a background and horizon, giving the impression of distance.

Painlevé is now working on a medical instructional film.

* * *

Marceau Pivert, who controls the radio and film departments in the French cabinet, plans many changes.

Three years ago, A. de Monzie, the minister of education, attempted to reorganise the industry; later, Henri Clerk, the film deputy, worked for a change in the system of film taxation. To-day M. Pivert is fighting against the dumping of cheap American films on the French market, and is seeking to abolish the agreement between France and America by which a free importation is allowed for 94 dubbed films each half-year. He also opposed an agreement with Italy, which compels France to make at least two films a year in Italian studios in order to use the revenues of French films shown in the country.

In spite of his nationalistic measures to benefit French film production, M. Pivert is meeting much opposition from sections of the industry, especially since he is reported to intend collecting royalties for the authors from box-office takings, an action not likely to be popular with exhibitors, distributors and producers.

Marceau Pivert, with strong left wing tendencies, also promises steps for the re-organisation of broadcasting on a socialistic base.

world FILM news

To the 76 British newspapers and magazines who pay us the compliment of quoting our views and discussing the problems we raise, we send all good wishes for the New Year

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- **DEAR DRUNKEN HOGMANAY** — *J. R. Allan*
- **S. J. PEPLOE** — *David Foggie, R.S.A.*
- **CALVINISM AND ART** — *M. P. Ramsay*

Special Features

HAMISH McCUNN, COMPOSER — *David Mackie*

BROADCAST TALKS — *Macnair Reid*

BURNS AND THE AWKWARD SQUAD — *J. Calder*

Scenario Competition

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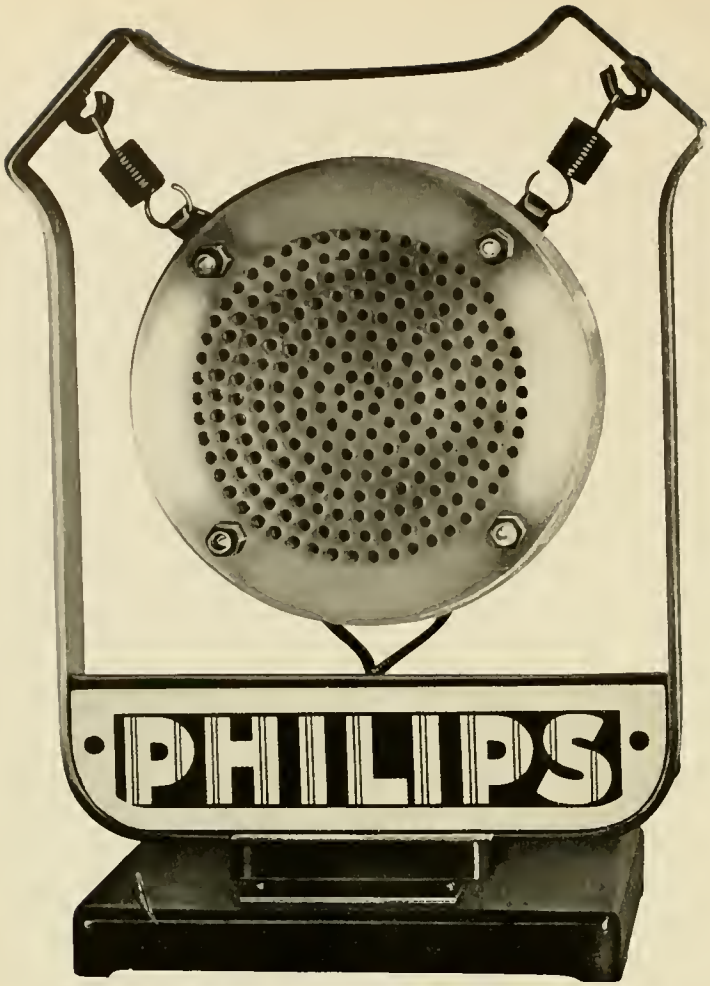
world FILM news

HOMAGE TO GARBO
WHAT CHANCE FOR EXTRAS?
FLAHERTY & THE NATURE-SPIRIT
OLLYWOOD STORY CONFERENCE

F. D. KLINGENDER
ALBERTO CAVALCANTI
GUNTHER KRAMPF
PENELOPE CHETWODE
ALFRED HITCHCOCK

FEBRUARY 1s



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MANCHESTER GUARDIAN: 'It is the first film to show the effects of poverty on the diet and growth of the nation and it is to be hoped that it will prove the starting point for a series of similar productions on problems which should be the concern of every member of the community.'

THE NEWS CHRONICLE: 'The most searching things in the picture are the little interviews with poor mothers struggling bravely to feed their families, with very small incomes, and the scenes in which children figure.'

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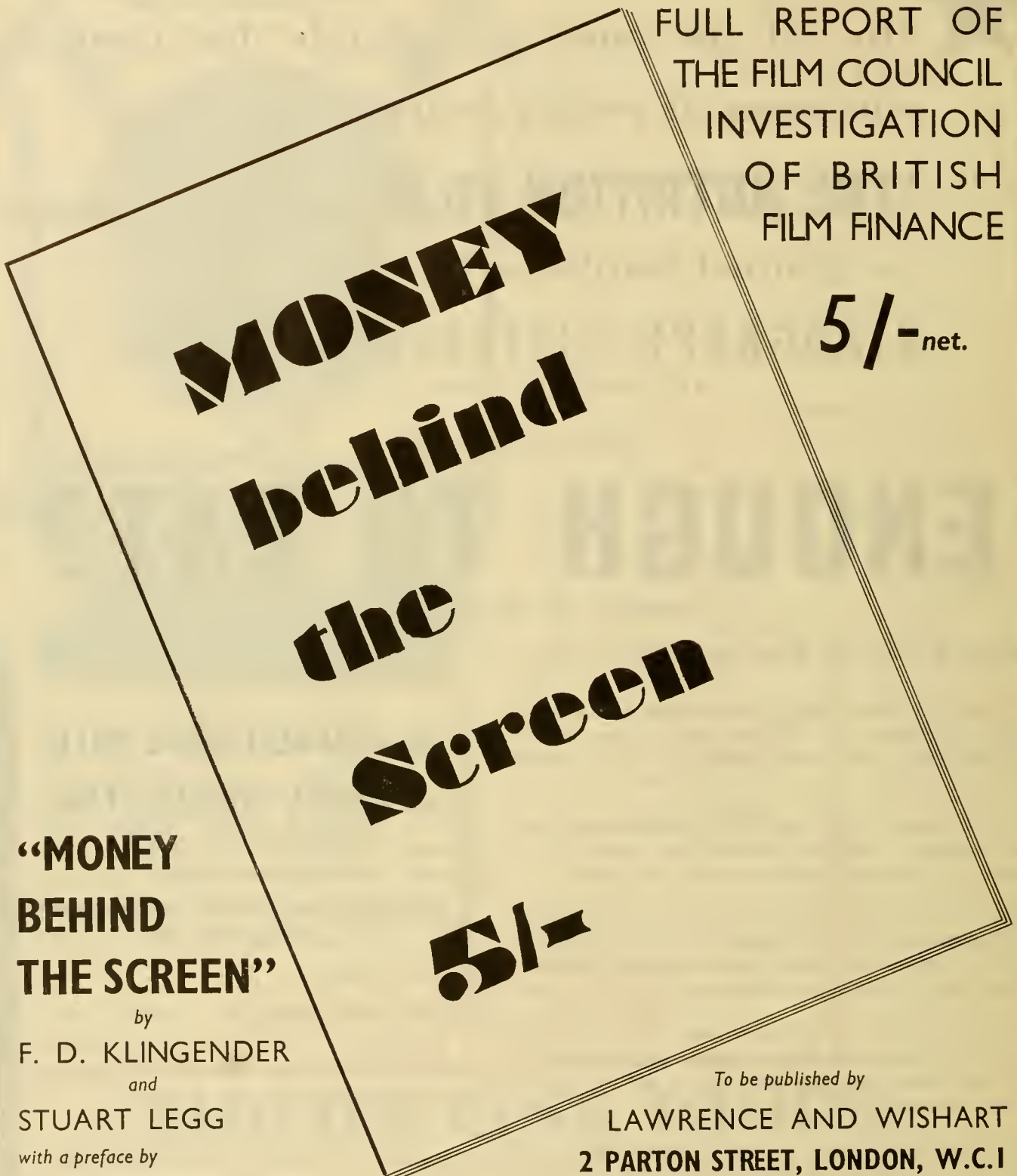
CINEMA: '*Monsieur Boulestin, celebrated gastronome and artist of the kitchen, showed what a bumper meal can be made from a few scraps of chicken, some vegetables and a few eating apples!*'



FULL REPORT OF THE FILM COUNCIL INVESTIGATION OF BRITISH FILM FINANCE

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Early in February

world FILM news
AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
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HOMAGE TO GARBO

(First of a series in which famous stars and directors will reveal unexpected loyalties)

By ALBERTO CAVALCANTI

SOTÉRO

SOME sitting-room theorist made, on sex-appeal, an unexpected but quite true remark: "Actors on the screen, despite the darkness of cinema-halls, don't have direct appeal to the sexual instincts of the audience: they only touch their imagination. This would explain why most of the stars' 'fans' are of their own sex."

And he concluded subtly: "The main reason why the male public rushes to see Gary Cooper is because he represents, on the screen, what they would like to be in life. He is the average male audience ideal."

Miss Garbo would have been an even better example of this theory.

The ideal of millions of women all over the globe, women of all races and colours, what a responsibility! Yet, somehow, Miss Garbo has managed to hold the position for an exceptionally long time. And, what is more, while doing it she has never ceased to deserve our greatest admiration.

Incidentally, one could add that she is also the "ideal" of many other stars, and that is why she is imitated so often. None of her imitators have ever attained her prestige and—her greatness.

I hear that Miss Garbo is an intelligent woman, and I can well believe it, for there is intelligence in the choice of her parts (she has played characters from Dumas, Maugham, O'Neil, Pirandello, Tolstoi); just as much intelligence as in the choice of her directors (Stiller, Pabst, Feyder, Brown, Mamoulian, etc.).

But her intelligence does not alone account for her greatness.

The Swedish actress has always remained a "foreigner" in Hollywood. She is born to film in her own country. Swedish films had a sort of sensitiveness and restraint that have since been lost to films. These are Miss Garbo's own main qualities.

Besides, Swedish films were ever the only "romantic" films, and this is very important in Miss Garbo's biography.

Although publicity departments tried to present Greta Garbo as a "mysterious woman," she is nothing else but a professional actress, and a good actress, too. Just as much as La Duse, or Réjane, or even their illustrious ancestor, Rachel.

Like them she doesn't need to show her legs. Like them she doesn't need to play girlish parts or appear insistently as a little boy.

We are thankful to her for being a dancer, in *Grand Hotel*, without dancing, and for sparing us quite a few sentimental songs in her films. We are thankful to her for this ability to avoid hysterics in her big scenes and for quietly giving us the impression that, somehow, she never empties completely her reserves of emotion.

Yes, however sorry the said publicity departments might be, nobody believes in Greta Garbo's mystery; she succeeds nevertheless in maintaining round her an atmosphere of unreality, because she is a "romantic" actress, and being intelligent she knows it.

This consciousness of being a "foreigner" and "romantic" accounts for the durability and the quality of her success—as much as the sensible choice of her parts and of her directors, and as much again as the perfection of her craftsmanship.

The whole is so gracefully put together, and so highly feminine that, considering the instability and the diversity of elements used in film-making, every one of her appearances could have destroyed it. But at least since *Queen Christina*, the delicate structure has proved to be of considerable solidity as well.

Homage to Garbo. In the film world, so full of faked values, she deserves all praise and respect.

THE CURSE OF DIALOGUE

By Gunther Krampf

Master of Light

IN THE BRITISH studios more consideration is given to dialogue than to any other aspect of film-making. To my mind dialogue is relatively unimportant. If I want to hear good dialogue, I can turn on the radio.

This emphasis on dialogue contradicts the basic principle of film, which must always be the communication of emotion through the eyes by pictorial effect. The three components, pictorial effect, acting, and dialogue, should be well-balanced in the good picture, otherwise the effect will approximate a photographed stage-play. A film story should be written especially for the screen.

The adaptation of a stage-play is unlikely to succeed, as dialogue is almost bound to receive undue emphasis at the expense of the visuals. The picture will become slow and heavy. In other arts the same principle is true. Music written for the organ cannot be played successfully by the violin. Every art has its own technique, its own media of expression.

In the good days of the German film, 1919–25, the primary consideration of first-class men like Lang, Pommer and Pabst was always this. The cameraman in Germany was the king of the studio. He worked closely with the director on the preparation for a film and his job was to convey the true meaning of the story through the camera and the camera only. It was the director's job to co-ordinate the work of the artists and technicians and to direct the acting. The rest was in the hands of the cameraman.

British producers do not give this power to their cameramen. Camera-work has become largely a cut and dried affair. Effects and even minor matters of exposure and focusing are often decided for him. He is allowed little latitude and little scope for expressing his conception of the story's meaning.

In my opinion, film-makers have, in general, an incomplete understanding of the true art of the film. To me it is very clear. The story must be told by the picture and the atmosphere with which the cameraman has succeeded in investing it. His art is to employ every available technical device in the right place. There is a tendency for young directors to insist on use of new technical methods simply because they are new, not because they will contribute anything to the inner meaning and spirit of the story. In film there is a particular danger of reversing the relative importance of the instruments of the achievement and the achievement itself.

Technical devices are certainly important. In the Germany of 1920, there was little money to be spent on pictures, and film-makers had to be very ingenious. Necessity led to the discovery of panning, trucking and low camera-angle. These devices were soon imitated in Russia and Hollywood, but often unimaginative men used them absurdly. Even in the great days of the German film the imaginative men were few. Among them Erich Pommer, Pabst, Murnau, Dr. Ludwig Berger, and Fritz Lang. These men have made an immeasurable contribution to the art of cinema.

In film, truth and sincerity are hard to obtain. There are so many temptations to over-light a set, to avoid dirt and untidiness where they should normally be. Producers will tell you that the cinema public wishes to see things clean, beautiful, glamorous. But I do not believe this to be the case. You can arouse the emotions only by the representation of truth. A white-washed wall for background, with an actor properly directed, well lit and composed, will express this as adequately as an elaborate set, and probably more truthfully.

The false economy of methods of production has been largely responsible for many failures. Great effort is exerted to push forward a production by shooting as many scenes as possible per day. This is not fair either to the technicians or the artists. It harasses the creative workers and gives them little opportunity to do justice to the story. On the other hand, the tendency is, as in Hollywood, to spend an enormous sum of money on elaborate, artificial scenes with glamour and glitter—scenes which can be simply classified as entertainment. The whole attitude is wrong. The thing of fundamental importance is to tell the story by the picture, to stick closely to the visual effect. In this, the basic principle of movie, film has a language in which to speak to all nationalities. In this, it is an art.

Gunther Krampf, the Austrian cameraman, was associated with some of the best work of the famous pre-Nazi school of German cinematography. This school produced Erich Pommer, Fritz Lang, Murnau, Pabst, Berger, Wagner, and Hoffmann. Krampf was cameraman on the famous 1926 version of *Student of Prague*, on *Cinderella* (1923), *Hands of Orlac* (1924), *Schinderhannes*, *Pandora's Box*, *The Last Company*, and, more recently, on *The Maid Johanna*.

To England he introduced back projection in *Rome Express*. He ranks the pictorial effects of the second-rate film *The Bells* as among the best work he has done. He was responsible also for camera-work on *The Outsider*, *The First Mrs. Fraser*, *The Ghoul*, *Death at Broadcasting House*, *Everything is Thunder*, *His Lordship*, *The Tunnel*, and *The Amateur Gentleman*. Gunther Krampf has made a considerable contribution to English cinema, and on the opening of the Shepherd's Bush studios his advice was invited on the equipment. Many of the best ideas of the German studios were thus incorporated. He has done much to create a standard of photography for the English film, and as a passionate advocate of the art of cinema has helped the men he has trained to a better understanding of the medium.

EDITORIAL

Secrets of Film Finance

Last month's article on the "Secrets of British Film Finance" had a startling sequel. On the day of publication the intelligence department of one of the big banks sent round for a flattering number of copies. Within a week came the news that the banks had taken thought and that the policy of lavish credits was to be reconsidered. Fleet Street echoed the story and quoted solidly from our article in both news and financial columns—not always with acknowledgment. A note of panic came into one of the trade papers. "Bad, very bad," it said, of the action of the banks, but acknowledged the salutary effect of a clean-up of film finance. Here and there an inspired newspaper column softened the blow to public confidence by talking of the fundamental difficulties of the British market and the necessity for speculation.

We are glad to have done this service. We stand, above all, for the interests of the creative worker and for good films; and good films are impossible when production conditions are those of a lunatic asylum.

One result of our article was to confirm our distrust in the independence of some of the newspaper film columns. We know our film columnists pretty well, and good men they are, but in many quarters a gesture was cast to the advertisement section and we were told the story was "too dangerous." "Too dangerous," though everyone knew the Film Council had no other interest than to tell the story as objectively as possible, and though everyone knew it was true. It is a curious irony that the banks did not think it "too dangerous," and that Mr. Maxwell before the Moyne Committee was no less violent in his comment than our figures were violent in their fact.

We have one comment to make. So long as the film industry inhibits its journalists and frightens away honest criticism, it lays itself open to grave harms. The gold rush of British film finance has gone on unchecked and a noble opportunity has been wasted because Wardour Street neither told itself the truth nor allowed anyone else to tell it. We hope that one of the results of the current show-down will be a freer spirit of criticism.

Film Policy for Africa

AS WESTERN EDUCATION and the dissemination of Western civilisation by trade spreads over Africa, her native peoples are beginning to question its vaunted superiority, judging naturally by only what they actually see or hear of it. England and America are to them as far off as their strangeness as China and India were to Marco Polo or Vasco de Gama. Even if they come to the West for study or on business, it is too utterly different to be comprehended easily.

One Gold Coast African, who had been on a long tour of the British Isles as a band drummer, could on his return talk only of the "wonderful tower at Eastbourne"—a typically Marco Polo touch—and how the cars and traffic were "too much." He returned thankfully to his quiet village, reckoning its peace and freedom from worry as the greatest luxury he could imagine.

Yet while despising many of the manifestations of western civilisation Africans are fully aware of its power and potentialities as a weapon of strength. They are demanding more and more education and are striving to arm themselves with it so that they may be at least on equal terms with the white race.

In all this stirring of racial pride and tradition, together with the urge to acquire the knowledge and material benefits of the West, there lies grave danger to the white position in Africa. If clashes of brutality and bloodshed are to be avoided, the white Governments must somehow meet this hunger for Western knowledge and education in the wisest possible manner. Films of an educational and descriptive nature are the only means by which a real knowledge of life and conditions in the West can be obtained.

The trouble, in West Africa at any rate, is that Government has little revenue to spend on education, much less to inaugurate a film policy for the purpose. It would be worth finding the money somehow, if it would prevent this vague unrest and craving for knowledge of the world to-day from crystallising into deep hostility.

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* *The Film Council has published its first book. The full report from which last month's story of film finance was taken was issued on January 18th, as "Money Behind the Screen" (Lawrence and Wishart, 5s.). It appears over the names of Dr. F. D. Klingender and Stuart Legg with an introduction on behalf of the Film Council by John Grierson.*

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Zéro de Conduite

To the Editor,

World Film News.

We hope you will not forget in your "Review of Reviews" an interesting example of criticism in relation to *Zéro de Conduite* (*Nought for Behaviour*), the Jean Vigo film now running at the Everyman, Hampstead. The comments of Mr. Ian Coster of the *Evening Standard* and Miss C. A. Lejeune of the *Observer* are so much alike that they have some appearance of being concerted. "Nought for direction. Nought for acting. Nought for story. Nought for continuity. Five for trying," says Miss Lejeune glibly, onetwothreefourfivesix justlikethat. Mr. Coster repeats the criticism, almost to the word.

It seems to us the silliest and most irresponsible criticism that has disgraced our film columns these many months. Others have taken a rap at *Zéro*, but with some regard for the pitfalls that beset the hasty and cocksure critic when an unusual style of art is concerned. Here we have the smart-alick in full and horrible cry.

We expect much from critics of such distinguished papers as the *Standard* and the *Observer* and much that was great and fine could have been discovered in *Zéro de Conduite*. We believe so because we have, quite simply, seen it; and not once but in the many times we have watched the film since it first appeared in Paris four years ago.

This perhaps is not the occasion to describe our own critical sense of the picture. *Zéro* will still be alive when some of the films which now secure the fervent attention of Miss Lejeune are as dead as mutton, and it will have ample opportunity to register among the classics of film expression. We only wish, before the occasion passes, to make our protest against a distempered and ugly critical performance. We are supported in this by correspondents in both England and Scotland who have asked us, some in anger and some in contempt, to express their disappointment.

Vigo is dead and he died young, tortured to the last by such criticism as we have now in evidence. Yet the promise of his imagination was greater than in anyone we have ever known in cinema. Images were the life of the man. He thought, wrote and shot in images, and except his films are seen in terms of this language of images—a true language for cinema as for poetry—they may certainly be difficult to understand.

But surely it is just this effort of understanding which is the privilege of criticism. When understanding fails, it is a pity; when the critic is insensitive to the harm of such failure, it is, shall we say, a breach of common decency. Time, we think, will show that Miss Lejeune and Mr. Coster have done an ill-service to both their papers and themselves. This is particularly unfortunate in the case of Miss Lejeune, for she was once a sympathetic and careful critic, and a host of readers throughout the country looked to her for guidance. It was a great opportunity which will not soon come again.

Alberto Cavalcanti
Maurice Jaubert
John Grierson

"Walls-Lynn Comedies go down well . . ."

CONFLICTING TASTES OF BRITISH FILM-GOERS

Q. 1. ARE WE GETTING THE RIGHT KIND OF FILMS?

Q. 2. DO BRITISH PRODUCERS AND OTHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FILM SUPPLY MAKE A CLOSE ENOUGH STUDY OF PUBLIC REACTION?

Q. 3. WHAT KIND OF FILMS DO WE WANT?

MIDDLE CLASS LIKES BRITISH FILMS

★

WORKING CLASS DOES NOT

★

FAMILY AUDIENCES LIKE ROMANCE

★

SCOTTISH FILM-GOERS FIND ENGLISH FILMS MORE FOREIGN THAN HOLLYWOOD'S

These questions were answered by some 66 exhibitors in a symposium on box-office appeal published in the special annual number of the *Daily Film Renter*. WORLD FILM NEWS has asked the Film Council to summarise their replies.

The 66 exhibitors mentioned above, represent all parts of the country, including industrial areas, south coast holiday resorts, cathedral towns and London suburbs.

The social types these exhibitors cater for come under three main general headings: "working class," "family patronage," and "middle class."

Working-Class Audiences

Question 1: *Are you getting the right kind of films for your audiences?*

The replies to this question given by the independents, as distinct from the major circuits, complain of a lack of choice, particularly as far as English films are concerned. Allowing for this, the exhibitors, while on the whole satisfied with the more vigorous American films (not necessarily the most expensively-produced ones), are practically unanimous in regarding the majority of British films as unsuitable for their audiences. British films, one Scottish exhibitor writes, should rather be called English films in a particularly parochial sense: they are more foreign to his audience than the products of Hollywood, over 6,000 miles away.

Again and again exhibitors of this category complain of the "old school tie" standards inherent in so many British films. They describe the "horse-laughs" with which the Oxford accents of supposed crooks are greeted and the impatience of their patrons with the well-worn "social drama" type of filmed stage show. Similarly, the lack of *action*, and the excess of superfluous dialogue are censored. A significant statement, which frequently occurs, is that English films are either too high-brow (in the Bloomsbury sense) or else too stupid for their audiences. As one exhibitor puts the former case: "I do not expect that the man in the street would readily exchange his seaside picture postcard for the latest piece of surrealism."

Films with tempo and action, stirring in their appeal, simple and straightforward in treatment and related to the lives of the people appear to be the type preferred in this group. Comedy and slapstick are also required. Romance and melodrama of the better type are popular, whereas history is almost universally condemned. In the-two-feature programmes the working-class audiences want two good films, not one luxury super and one quickie.

(It is very interesting to note that one exhibitor ranges Air and War films with history pictures as unpopular.)

Opinions differ about musicals. In some cases they are still popular, in others their interest seems to flag. This bears out American evidence.

In general, the habit of producers in flogging to death a certain type of film that once made a hit, is censored and variety of type is stated to be essential in maintaining the interest of audience. (This applies to all types of exhibitors.)

Question 2: *Do British producers and others responsible for your film supply make a close enough study of public reaction?*

As one would expect from the replies to the previous question, the majority of exhibitors in this group complain that the British producers in particular do not sufficiently study their type of audience.

Question 3: *What kind of films do you want?*

Two replies appear to be particularly significant. From Liverpool :—It is a great mistake to regard many so-called "high-class" films as unsuitable for working-class audiences. While they may like gangster films, they also greatly appreciate intelligent pictures, provided they have plenty of action, a probable story with a strong human element and a modern angle in the theme.

Another exhibitor from Loughborough who heads his contribution "Producers versus Public," stresses the difference in life and outlook of the level-headed, intelligent provincial worker who works hard and plays hard and of the sedentary London worker. He wants films that are not only British in cost, but also British in character, that breathe the spirit of life in our land as we know it. He asks producers to study the lives of the people at home and in their workshops and mines and then to make films.

Mixed "Family" Audiences

Questions 1 *and* 2*:*

Opinions about the suitability of the film supply are not so negative as those of the working-class group of exhibitors. British output is nearer the tastes of this audience, although opinions do differ.

Question 3: *What kind of films?*

"Love, life and laughter with serious interludes, touch their heart strings, simple stories with family appeal." These are the verdicts. Light comedy; a simple blending of pathos and humour; romantic films with a sensible story; "not too true life," though dealing with people like themselves whose lives they can understand and whose reactions they can appreciate. A happy ending is demanded.

One exhibitor describes the "shop girl falls in love with the titled person" type of Cinderella story as particularly popular. The Walls-Lynn comedies go down well, although in one case, exception was taken to "swear-words, doubtful jokes and salacious situations" as being unsuitable for family halls. The same writer also dislikes actors who speak with a foreign accent.

People in this group want "something they need not think about, something that will catch the eye, tickle their fancy but not trouble their mind." Star value is stated to be particularly important. American films with British actors are most popular, while British films with what are described as "second-rate stars imported from Hollywood" are depreciated. Although high-brow stuff is disliked an occasional history film may make a hit. A Scottish exhibitor was surprised by the success of *Tudor Rose* and *Rhodes of Africa*. Open air films are liked.

Middle-Class Audiences

Questions 1 *and* 2*: Are you getting the right kind of films for your audiences?*

Do British producers and others responsible for your film supply make a close enough study of public reaction?

Satisfaction, particularly with the British supply is much more general in this category. British pictures are stated to be improving and are in some cases the type most in demand (especially in places like Bournemouth, Dorking, the Isle of Wight, etc.).

Question 3*: What kind of films do you want?*

"Good clean comedy and society drama with interesting dialogue, something people can think about and discuss afterwards" seems to sum up the most frequent attitude as to what is wanted. The Gaumont (Matthews-Hitchcock) and Wilcox (Anna Neagle) type of British film seems to go down particularly well. History is often stated to be popular, as are mystery films. American gangster, crime or police films are frowned upon. In the highbrow line popularity seems sometimes, though not unequivocally, to extend as far as *Things to Come*, while Bergner, on the other hand, appears definitely to be welcome.

As in the former group, star value is stressed, and opinions differ as to whether a single star or a team is the better policy. English actors and background are favoured even in American films, *Mutiny on the Bounty* being cited as a case in point.

General Trends

In this summary we have attempted to select as impartially as possible from a vast mass of opinions what appear to be the distinguishing trends reported for each type of audience specified. These types frequently overlap and are not always clearly distinguished in the replies (although it is significant how often the social type of audience is indicated).

It is equally true that there are many elements of appeal that tend to be demanded by all types of audiences, and that next to and to some extent over-riding the variations in the tastes of different social groups there is a general trend in the taste of our period and in the film style able to satisfy that trend. This is borne out in a particularly interesting manner by the statements of two executives of American renting organisations in England.

Mr. Friedman of Columbia, describing the tendencies of the past year and the policy of his firm for the coming one, claims that next to realism, and even exceeding it in box-office appeal, the "happiness" picture is the most significant and progressive type to-day. By that he means the picture embodying the personal quest for happiness in the reality of our everyday existence, as initiated by Columbia with *It Happened One Night* and developed in such films as *If You Could Only Cook*, *Deeds*, etc. Similarly, Mr. Milder describes the policy of Warner Brothers as one of concentration on front page news value. And he explains this statement by describing the alliance between the newspaper and the film as a dual one: its first aspect is essentially realistic, the event of the day. The occurrence of front page actuality is at the same time the most striking film topic (especially if the release of the latter can be synchronised with the actual occurrence of the event, as was the case with *Boulder Dam* or *China Clipper*. Its second aspect is that, illustrated by *Green Pastures*, in which a film itself becomes front page news owing to its special treatment and quality.

Detailed Survey Needed

Every one concerned with the success of the film industry in satisfying the ever-changing demands of the box office must welcome collective statements of so frank a nature as those presented in this symposium. At the same time the complexity of the problem, the lack of agreed standards of classification, other than the most vague ones, the hopelessness of approaching the task in terms of "types" of films, instead of in terms of specific points of appeal that may be expressed in many different types—all these difficulties call for a systematic, scientific analysis of the whole problem of box-office.

Box-Office Enquiry

To collect and utilise the invaluable audience knowledge of the exhibitor throughout the country; to provide a really sound social classification of audience types, not neglecting the important regional differences; to study the films that appeal to each type and to provide a simple statement of the basic points of appeal that made these pictures popular in their respective audience group—that is the aim of the Box-Office Enquiry which the Film Council have selected as their next task and for which they hope to obtain the wholehearted collaboration of as many exhibitors as possible.

"Scottish Exhibitor was surprised by the success of Tudor Rose"

"The Scarlet Pimpernel"—a crowd scene.

KINGS ... FOR A DAY

WOULD-BE ACTORS AND ACTRESSES—THE WORLD IS FULL OF THEM. IN THIS VERY HUMAN STORY DOROTHY HOLLOWAY, ASSISTANT CASTING DIRECTOR AT LONDON FILMS, DESCRIBES THE STRANGE PEOPLE SHE MEETS IN THE COURSE OF HER WORK. WHAT ATTRACTS THEM TO FILMS, SHE ASKS. NOT THE GUINEA-A-DAY ... NOT AMBITION ... IT MUST BE THE CHILD IN EACH OF US THAT LIKES TO DRESS UP.

THE MOST INTERESTING department in a film studio is the casting department. Not, perhaps, to the casual visitor, who is usually overwhelmed by the vast array of files and card indexes; but to the Casting Director every one of those card records is a human contact. I have the records of over 10,000 people, most of whom I have personally interviewed. They vary in age from babies of a few months to one old man who claims to be 107. Every race and nationality is represented in those files; Negroes, Chinese, Mexicans, Javanese—I can even put my finger on a Tahitian girl. And the variety of accomplishments they boast is amazing. There are wire-walkers, knife-throwers, parachute jumpers, animal imitators—one man can imitate over 200 strange noises from the croak of a bull-frog, which he once had to do for me, to the buzzing of a circular-saw, or the trumpeting of an elephant.

Doctors, boxers, clergymen

Many of them are ex-Naval and Army officers who have seen service in the remotest corners of the Empire. When I have time I like to listen to the stories of their adventures. I have ex-doctors, ex-prize-fighters, ex-schoolmasters and even an ex-clergyman. One man has been a war-correspondent in nearly every quarter of the globe where the enmities of mankind have made front page news. He is also willing to tame a lion or a python for me if I wish. Another man hunted elephants in Ceylon; he can do anything you like with the huge creatures and talks to them in the language of the native mahouts, which is quite different from any other human language and understood only by the animals themselves. Still another worked in the frozen north, carrying provisions to the trappers in their snow-bound outposts by dog-sleigh. He speaks the language of the Eskimos and Anascopie Indians—what use it will ever be to me I do not know, but there it is amongst my records. What attracts most of these people to the films I have never been able to understand. Not the occasional guinea, for surely there are better and easier ways for people with their experience to earn more than they can ever hope to do at film work. Not ambition, for most of them are content to remain in the crowd. It must be the child that is in each of us that loves to dress up and pretend, or, deeper than this it may provide an illusory gratification for some repressed impulse.

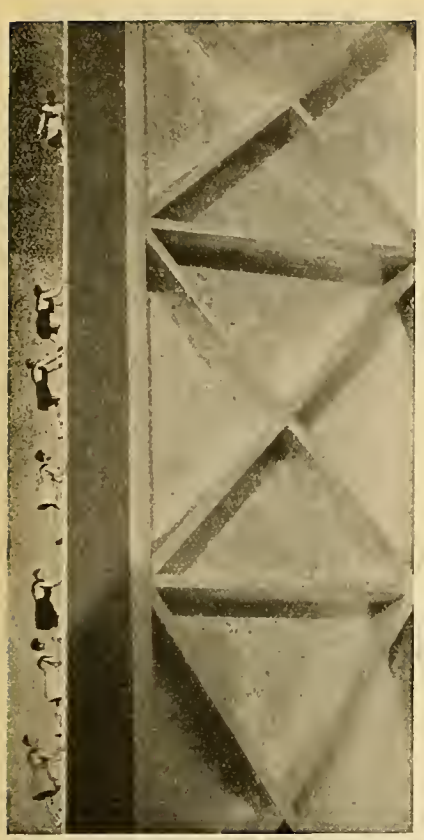
Then there are the letters I get from all over the world asking how the writer can become a film actor. These people are serious, no crowd work for them, they want to *act*. "All my life," they tell me, "I have longed to act." Most of them assure me, "This is not the letter of a screen-struck girl" (or boy, for there are as many men as women with this burning desire to be somebody else for a space), "I feel I have it in me to become a great actor." This is surely the only profession to which people feel they are born without the need for training or preparation of any kind. Most of them expect to be given leading roles at once, just a few are willing to accept "a small part to commence," but all are confident of eventual stardom. Those who live a reasonable distance from the Studio I interview, but seldom do I find one who could possibly live up to his or her own bright hopes. The ones I feel sorriest for are the "second Marie Dresslers," they are pathetic—and so numerous. Usually one can form a fairly good impression of people from their letters, but sometimes I get a surprise.

One day my usual letter of advice and discouragement was answered by one so full of confident assurance that I was constrained to see the writer, a woman of over 50. "I have run through the whole gamut of human emotions," she wrote. "I have a strong personality and can make an audience laugh and cry at my will"—and a lot more to the same effect. When I made an appointment she wrote and told me how wise I had been to do so for I should find in her the actress for whom the world had been waiting. As the time of the appointment approached I felt almost nervous myself at the prospect of meeting such an overwhelming personality; but when she was announced there toddled into my office a little middle-aged woman so small that sitting on an ordinary chair her toes barely touched the floor, and so timid that she could only answer my questions in a whisper. I suppose she is still dreaming of the worlds she might have conquered.

Blonde to-day, Brunette to-morrow

All these people who find their way into my files, either because of previous film experience or because of some specialised knowledge or ability in other lines, are classified under various headings. Those who skate or ski, ride horseback or follow other sports exceptionally well have their own categories. Then there are the character headings, barmaids, nurses, typists, smart matrons, duchesses, debutantes, etc. Crooks may be "tough" or sinister; professional men are divided into doctors, lawyers, bank managers, clergymen and so on. Each actor may be found under a dozen or more different headings. Now that we have begun to make colour films I have to classify people according to the colour of their hair, but owing to the versatility of the hairdressers' art and the changeability of woman this part of my file is by no means reliable, for the brunette of to-day is the blonde of to-morrow, and the silver-haired matron may be a flaming red-head next week.

The art of casting, quite apart from its practice in one's job, is very liable to encroach



There were not enough steeple-jacks in London, so ex-sailors were employed for climbing this 90 foot Tower for "Things to Come"!

Below: Kings, Judges, Princes, Peers, Soldiers, Sailors and Statesmen, massed for a scene in "The Man who could work Miracles"

upon one's leisure and even become an obsession. It is no longer possible to seek relaxation in fiction, for one is all the time "casting the parts," and every story becomes a procession of well-known film-faces. Every visit to the theatre or cinema, whether official or not, is a Search for Talent. In tubes and buses, in shops and restaurants one is for every scrutinising and categorising—and often repining. If only one could have had that man sitting in the opposite corner for the Stockbroker last week—what a splendid type! Or that girl, wouldn't she have been exactly right in the Draper's Shop scene. The man is probably an undertaker and the girl a photographer's receptionist, for people in real life so seldom look like their jobs. That is why the Casting Director's task is so difficult. All his life he is searching for the Perfect Type, and yet when we come down to essentials there is no such thing as "type." For instance, everybody is quite sure what a doctor should look like because everybody knows one, yet when I cast a doctor somebody is sure to say he "doesn't look the type," because the man does not resemble any doctor that he knows, although he may be the living image of my medical adviser. What, for example, is the Tram Conductor "type"? There are just as many types of tram conductor as there are uniforms to fit them, and the only detail in which they resemble one another is the thickening of the thumb that operates the ticket punch—which is quite unimportant in a film!

The social scale, too, is of very little account in this business of so-called "type casting," when, of course, the characters do not have to speak, as in crowds and cameo "bits." I learned that useful lesson very early in my career through listening to one of the "extras" telling of the many and varied parts he has played, including—to his own surprise—that of a bishop. I had seen him as a British Museum attendant, a Gas Inspector and a gamekeeper and several other unexalted characters, but a bishop was the last thing for which I should have dreamed of suggesting him. I tried to visualise him in cope and mitre and was immediately struck by his surprising suitability for such a role. From that moment I looked at actors with a different eye.

Foreign types

Foreign directors are sometimes difficult to work with as they are all the time subconsciously looking for their own national types. Suppose, for instance, one is casting for a French director and an engine-driver is wanted. Then compare the difference between the grave, careworn man of near middle-age who pilots our great expresses, and the cheerful, jaunty young French drivers who hurl their shrieking locomotives across the Continent with such an air of reckless abandon. There are shining exceptions: such men as Alexander Korda, the great cosmopolitan, and René Clair, whose art is universal, are entirely free from the restrictions imposed by these racial images.

My own opinion—I don't know if it is shared by other Casting Directors, but I do know that in stating it I shall incur the wrath of every Director and Producer in the industry—is that Casting is a distinct art; as distinct from directing as sculpture is from painting. Some painters, of course, are also good sculptors, but few excel in both arts. So the casting of a picture should be left entirely to the Casting Director. He spends his life studying the actors, their personalities, their reactions to different methods of direction, their ability to interpret different roles and their transformation in costume and make-up. It requires a specialised imagination possessed by few directors to look at a row of very ordinary young men in modern lounge suits and know which one will most successfully wear a cavalier's cloak or a friar's habit. I look forward to the time when the Casting Director's job will be taken seriously, when he will be entirely responsible for his part in the production and not merely regarded as a man (or woman) with a card index and a good memory for faces.

ROBERT FLAHERTY INTERPRETS THE NATURE-SPIRIT OF INDIA

by Penelope Chetwode

[Frances Flaherty

Deep relief sculpture on Hoysalesvara temple of Indra, Lord of the Heavens and his wife, on their elephant. The Hindu temple at Halebid is the largest in Mysore, but remains unfinished. It dates from the late twelfth century and is built of light grey stone, which is soft when quarried but hardens on exposure.

INDIA HAS, IN the last few years, been "discovered" as an effective setting for films. *Clive of India*, *Bengal Lancer*, and *The Charge of the Light Brigade* constitute the most successful outcome (from a box-office point of view) of this discovery. But to get any idea of the country itself, we have had to wait for Robert Flaherty's *Elephant Boy*. The first three films were largely studio productions filled with penny bazaar orientalism. *Bengal Lancer* was an outstandingly good thriller but the only really convincing shot in it (so far as India was concerned) was that of the railway bridge at Agra.

Now, at last, we have a film of India itself. To make it, Flaherty spent over a year in Mysore, and he made full use of his peculiar genius for sympathy with and understanding of a foreign people. The fundamental difference between Indians and Westerners lies solely in their respective attitudes to human beings. In the West, man has always been, and still is, the measure of all things. He considers that animals have no souls and are, therefore vastly inferior to him. They simply exist for his pleasure: to hunt, eat, or domesticate. The vegetable kingdom comes still lower in his estimation. The Indian thinks just the opposite: according to his view, everything has a soul, that is to say everything contains in itself a part of the great Universal soul.

I remember so well a conversation I and a friend once had with the orthodox Brahman Congress leader, Pandit Malaviya. He turned to me and said: "Miss Chetwode, I see God in you." I looked across at my friend with a superior air. "And," continued the Pandit, turning to my friend, "I see God in you. And" (here he pointed to a speck on the wall) "I see God in that ant."

Once you have grasped the significance of this outlook, you are halfway to an understanding of Indian art and life. You will realise that a human being is of no more importance than a canna lily. You will sympathise with a king who renounces his throne to become an ascetic and identify himself with nature. Robert Flaherty has realised and appreciated this Indian sense of unity, and has made you feel throughout the film that Toomai is identified with the jungle: that he is a part of the teak leaves and creepers and elephants, just as they are part of him.

Mysore is the ideal Indian state in which to develop this theme. It has vast areas of primæval jungle, it is a stronghold of orthodox Hinduism and Jainism, it has large mediæval temples rising from the red earth like huge straggling indestructible tropical plants.

Mystical ties between man and nature, characteristic of India, is the great theme which inspires Robert Flaherty's new Film ELEPHANT BOY

Toomai, the elephant boy, asleep in the jungle.

One of its most remarkable features (of which there are some superb shots in the film) is the hill at Sravana Belgola, the sacred seat of the Jains* in South India. The granite summit of this hill has been carved (in the late tenth century) into the largest free-standing monolithic statue in the world. It is reached by a flight of six hundred steps and, when the great Duke of Wellington, as Colonel Wellesley, visited Sravana Belgola in 1800, he estimated the statue's height at 60 feet. The actual height is 57 feet and the figure represents the Jain Saint Gommatesvara practising an austere form of yoga. The saint has identified himself so completely with nature that creepers climb over his body, ant-hills rise about his thighs and snakes crawl over his giant feet.

The two photographs of sculpture which illustrate this article are not actually stills from the film, though they were shot by Frances Flaherty on location. I have included them because they balance so perfectly the picture of Toomai asleep in the jungle: in actual life, the boy, the rich tangled undergrowth, and the great rough trunk of the elephant: in the sculpture human figures, luxuriant foliage and animals all seemingly growing out of one another and all of equal importance.

[*Frances Flaherty*

Frieze from the base of the Hoysalesvara temple, at Halebid, Mysore, representing sardulas (mythical lions).

* The Jains form a religious body, quite distinct from Hinduism but having strong philosophical affinities with Buddhism. They are famous for the strictness with which they observe their chief doctrine of Ahimsa, non-taking of life. Jains can frequently be seen walking along with cloths over their mouths and noses to avoid breathing in and destroying flies and microbes.

Meetings and Acquaintances

HARRY LANGDON

There is a man in town whose name was magic to many eight years ago, and, to those with affection for the great clowns of the cinema, it is magic still. HARRY LANGDON, the follower of Charlie Chaplin in Sennett's two-reel comedies and, later on, the baby-face star of *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp* and *The Strong Man*, has been making plans for a film with Joe Rock.

There is nothing of the sober clown about Langdon, but a brilliance of comedy in every description. He recounts the earnestness of the Sennett lot—"these funny guys have no sense of humour"—and rolls out the names of the able men who came from these early schools of two-reel comedy. It is an astonishing list, proving if proof were necessary that the best of all trainings for a director is in gag work. It includes Frank Capra (*Deeds*), once gag man for Langdon, Frank Lloyd (*Bounty*), Roy del Ruth (director of *Born to Dance*), Darryl Zanuck (*Pasteur*), Lewis Milestone, Norman Taurog and Lloyd Bacon. We are still it would seem in the direct Sennett tradition, though the old man himself has retired to a ranch in Canada.

The great thing about Langdon always was the logic of his comedy, and in this respect he seemed often superior to Chaplin. He conceived the notion of a clown, wholly innocent—a sort of God-will-send-his-angels-to-watch-over-you figure—and held to it so strictly that his themes achieved sometimes immense depth of reference. The moment when as the *deus ex machina* of *The Strong Man* he brought down the walls of Jericho and confounded the wicked is still one of the highest moments in comedy.

Langdon is playing with a script for a Coronation film—based on the notion of an impoverished duke who lets his windows on the line of march. There is more of the comic dereliction of our day in his description than in the whole of *Modern Times*. One wishes it could be made and that Langdon's creative talent could be used to the benefit of British films. It is an opportunity not to be lost.

Visitors to the Brussels Film Festival were impressed by the excellent organisation under MOLDAVSKY, mouse-like and energetic electrical engineer. He is an expert on electric recording and radio problems, and spends all his spare time in studying the cultural aspects of stage and cinema. He made good use of a recent business tour of the U.S.A. and returned full of information about government supported efforts.

The Appreciation Leagues of Schools and Universities impressed him as having an increasing influence on Hollywood production. The Federal theatres, state-subsidised, are putting across new and vital stuff, he says, and quotes *The Living Paper*, a hot-news *March of Time* in dramatic form, and *Bury the Dead*, a satiric play. He also visited Disney's studios and was excited by the almost communistic traditions on which they are run. He has now gone back to Brussels to continue his work with colleague Thirifays of the Club de l'Ecran (*World Film News* October issue), for better films in Belgium.

Among the shining instruments of his Wardour Street recording-room meet white-coated HARRY SHERIDAN, designer, engineer, producer and ace sound recordist.

One of the pioneers of the British film industry, Sheridan started in 1907 as an assistant operator at Terry's Cinema in the Strand. Thence he worked his way to chief operator, to theatre manager, to chief engineer of a big circuit. After the War he introduced the Automaticket system to England, and took a brief holiday from movies to supervise the Automaticket installation throughout London's Undergrounds and in the West-End theatres. Then came sound, and back went Sheridan to films, to set up his own recording studio and to specialise in the recording of shorts.

Sheridan probably has a closer knowledge of the commercial market for shorts than anyone in the field, and he predicts a big demand in the coming years. Two conditions, he says, are necessary for the successful development of British shorts. First, a supply of young directors with fresh ideas and technical ability; second, a good understanding of the economic limits of the market. He maintains that if the shorts industry is to build itself on its own profits (and not repeat the sorry tale of feature production) it is up to the industry to make cheap production an everyday reality.

Sheridan has set himself to apply this policy to his own practice. He has made it his business to encourage new directors, to train them in the economics of production and to see their films through to the distribution stage. In his own field of sound he believes that efficiency and quiet working can take a big strain off the directors' shoulders. By insisting on order and method in his studio he has eliminated waste of time and its chief cause—fuss. His equipment, spotlessly kept, is of his own design. He re-records from wax, thus saving intermediate prints. He demands clean cutting-rooms and careful handling of cutting-copies. In four years he has recorded 800 films and has seldom had to re-take for technical reasons.

In a world of extravagance and ballyhoo he has made the important contribution of sanity and method.

J. B. Priestley

J. B. PRIESTLEY has been co-operating with Cavalcanti in the production of a film on Switzerland, *We Live in Two Worlds*. It is a new kind of documentary. Priestley calls it a Filmtalk, the idea being to present in film form something of the quality of his essays. The theme is the paradox of the modern citizen who with all his deep-laid local and national loyalties, is being driven by his own economics to a new system of international loyalties. The Swiss peasant, detached and romantic as he may appear in his mountains, provides a brilliant example for the thesis, no economy being more tied to export and international relationships.

Priestley appears in the film and demonstrates an art of popularisation which is as powerful in terms of film as it is in writing. Cavalcanti's Swiss material is brilliantly shot and illustrates a modernised Switzerland very different from the usual picture-postcard version. He has brought in Jaubert, composer for *Zéro de Conduite*, *L'Atalante*, *Le Dernier Milliardaire* and *Mayerling*, to write his music.

Priestley talks of sitting down to learn the technique of script writing—no doubt with thoughts in mind of turning *Wonder Hero* and *Angel Pavement* into film form. His sense of satire and his affection for common people and common situations would be healthy additions to British cinema at the present time. Priestley is above all a great craftsman, as his *tour de force* in stage craft *Dangerous Corner* amply demonstrated. One looks for an object lesson in active narrative and fast dialogue from his script writing.

ENGLAND

The public's delight in the fast fading glories of the Russian aristocracy continues unabated, and after the extraordinary success in London of Sir Cedric Hardwick's *Tovarich* it would seem that Miss Dietrich is on safe ground with *Knight Without Armour*. This is a screen version of the James Hilton novel, and in it Miss Dietrich plays the part of a Russian countess who is rescued during the revolution of 1917 by a young member of the British Secret Service (Robert Donat). Jacques Feyder, whose *La Kermesse Héroïque* was acclaimed by critics on both sides of the Atlantic as one of the best pictures of 1936, is directing and his native wit should give the story piquancy as well as excitement. Miss Dietrich will probably find the settings a little different from her last screen visit to Russia, when she was confronted with the amazing gargoyles of Sternberg's *The Scarlet Empress*.

BALCON-METRO

The Michael Balcon-Metro alliance, recently celebrated, may be expected to bring forth some really good English films during the coming year. *The Wind and the Rain*, a delightful little story of university life in Scotland, will be one of the first pictures to be made and the schedule will probably include *Silas Marner*. Ben Goetz of Hollywood, will supervise.

* * *

That very popular continental play, *Storm in a Teacup*, in which the mongrel "Scruffy" battles for his life against officialdom, is being completed by Victor Saville Productions at Denham, and Saville has also made *Dark Journey*.

* * *

Thornton Freeland has recently returned from the Sahara with shots of the yearly salt caravan of 14,000 camels for Capitol Films' *Jericho*. Paul Robeson is the star and Thornton Freeland the director. The expedition, with cameramen John Boyle and T. A. Glover, Guy Bellairs (driver), and Kay Kettlewell (assistant cameraman) obtained spectacular shots with as many as 3,500 to 4,000 camels in the picture at the same time.

UP THE FLAG

Meanwhile a wave of patriotic fervour sweeps over all fronts and will shortly bring forth more than one stirring episode of martial or nautical life. Chief amongst these will probably be Norman Walker's *The Navy Eternal*, which he is directing for Herbert Wilcox Productions with the wholehearted co-operation of the authorities (Whitehall no longer withhold its blessings from such enterprises). The story is by Bartimeus and the cast includes Hazel Terry, Richard Cromwell, Robert Douglas, Noah Beery, H. B. Warner and a host of bluejackets, to say nothing of the "Nelson," "Rodney," "Iron Duke" and "Royal Oak." Miss Terry deserves a better fate than befell her in her screen debut, *Marriage of Corbal*, and it is to be hoped that this picture will give a real opportunity to show her ability.

* * *

1937 will see Elisabeth Bergner in an English version of one of her greatest successes—*Der Träumende Mund*, which she made some years ago in Germany.

Gaumont British have Robert Stevenson's *King Solomon's Mines* on the point of completion, and he will next direct the airline feature, *Non Stop, New York*, with Oscar Homolka, Desmond Tester and Nova Pilbeam.

* * *

Lennox Robinson is adapting Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* for B.I.P. Herbert Wilcox is preparing *Victoria the Great* for production at Pinewood.

Men Who Matter

AMERICA

The film trade has recently been celebrating the twenty-five-year jubilee of Adolph Zukor, head of Paramount and a noble warrior of the movies. Many of the great developments in the film business have been associated with his name. His first feat in film was to bring famous players from the stage to the screen and in this sense was a pioneer in putting cinema under the heel of the theatre.

The greatest of the Zukor phases was his partnership with Lasky. With Zukor operating the moves—and his quiet reserved style concealed a master trader—and Lasky's sense of showmanship behind production, came the period of Paramount supremacy between 1923 and 1928. These were the brave days that produced the epics of *The Covered Waggon, Thundering Herd, Pony Express*, and *Beau Geste* school. De Mille, Griffith, Cruze, Flaherty, Schoedsach, Cooper and von Sternberg were the directorial names in that Paramount period with Richard Dix, Ronald Colman, Gary Cooper, Clara Bow and William Powell taking over from the passing generation of Swansons, Meighans, Pola Negris, Jannings and Naldis.

When the Zukor-Lasky partnership broke it marked the end of an era. The swelling ambitions of Paramount with its flashy new circuit of public theatres and its seventeen million dollar centre on Broadway brought in the banks. The effective control passed from the old showmen to Wall Street.

Zukor belonged to the days when the showmen in fierce competition outcalculated, outshouted and outsmarted each other. He was not the least of the great figures in that scramble for honour and wealth which created the well-known trade marks of Metro-Goldwyn, Paramount, Fox, Warners and United Artists. Some men served their hour, some their generation and some mankind. Zukor—betwixt and between—served his generation. All honour to him.

* * *

Darryl F. Zanuck has said that "Slowly emerging from the throes of a tragic depression, men and women are coming into a broader and happier outlook." It is calculated that the kind of entertainment to go with prosperity should be light-hearted, and musical films predominate in all the companies' schedules. Metro is making *The Broadway Melody of* 1937, with Eleanor Powell, and Irving Berlin's *As Thousands Cheer. Swing High, Swing Low* from Paramount will present Carole Lombard as a singing and dancing star. There are many others.

GREATER REALISM

On the other hand the rising intelligence of the film public (or the rising respect of producers for it), proved by such films as *The Petrified Forest* and *Pasteur*, will be responsible for greater "realism." High seriousness is still being avoided for the most part, but stories will be given authentic and credible backgrounds. *The Good Earth* and Kipling's *Kim* due from Metro; *Men With Wings*, a survey of the history of flying, from Paramount; *Lost Horizon*, the new Capra production, from Columbia; and Universal's version of Remarque's *The Road Back*, illustrate this healthy trend.

History-and-hokum remain a profitable recipe. We are promised a biography of Beethoven from Warner Brothers; *Parnell* (with Gable) and *Marie Antoinette* (with Shearer) come from Metro. *The Life of Alfred Nobel* from Universal, and *Marco Polo*—a Goldwyn-Fairbanks Sr. production—from United Artists. There is talk of a *Chopin* film with Lederer, a life of *Zola* with Muni, and biographies of *Danton, Robin Hood* and (as always) of *Joan of Arc*.

* * *

Romantic "costume" films will include *Pride and Prejudice* (with Gable and Shearer), *The Prisoner of Zenda*, United Artists' *Wuthering Heights* (with Sylvia Sidney and Charles Boyer), Paramount's *Maid of Salem*, a story of witchcraft in American colonial days with Claudette Colbert, and Radio's *Michael Strogoff*.

* * *

DE MILLE'S EDUCATIONAL

The first educational film ever produced at a major studio for exclusive distribution to schools has just been completed at Paramount studios under the supervision of Cecil B. de Mille. The picture shows the developments of the plain regions of North America. A number of scenes from de Mille's spectacle, *The Plainsman*, have been incorporated.

The attention of the Film Council has been drawn to certain errors in the analysis of British Film Finance in the last issue of *World Film News*.

1. It was stated that Mr. Harold G. Judd was appointed Receiver of the City Film Corporation by Aldgate Trustees, Ltd.

Mr. Judd was appointed Receiver of New Ideal Pictures, Ltd., and not of the City Film Corporation, with which company he has had no connection.

2. It should be made clear that Aldgate Trustees, Ltd. did not guarantee to the film industry any sums of money, but, as their name implies, acted only as trustees for other parties.

3. With regard to Messrs. Glanvill, Enthoven & Co., and H. J. Enthoven & Sons, Ltd., it was stated that a shareholder of the latter was also a director of the former concern. It was not intended to suggest that the said firm and company were in any way connected with each other or with Mr. Judd's directorship of Pinewood Studios, Ltd.

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LEADING COUNSEL

Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. on
Our Tower of Babel

Generally speaking, the only British element nowadays in a so-called "British" film is its home of origin, in the same way as one classes a picture made in Hollywood as "American."

The producer is generally a man of almost any nationality—German, Italian, French, British, Rumanian, American. The director may possibly be an American, like Tay Garnett, Raoul Walsh, George Cukor, William K. Howard, Henry Hathaway, or Jack Conway. Equally, it is possible, or, for that matter, more than probable, that he is continental. There is the famous German Lubitsch; the Armenian Rouben Mamoulian, the French René Clair, the Italian Gregory La Cava, the Austrian Josef von Sternberg—all these are famous directors, who would never lay claim to anything approaching one hundred per cent. British or American nationality.

Cameras? Well, run your eye over the famous names among cameramen working on "British" and "American" pictures. The names of a few—Georges Perinal is French, Gunther Krampf is Austrian, Victor Armenise is Italian, Curt Courant is German, Jimmy Wong Howe is Chinese, Phil Tannura—Italian, Charles Rosher —British, Oliver Marsh—American.

As it is with producers, directors and cameramen, so is it with the greater portion of studio executives in the U.S. and England. But when we come to the sock and buskin proper, well, we have pretty well every nationality in the world represented!

No, extreme nationalism in the art of entertainment has ever worked. It limits expansion and dwarfs progress.—*Film Renter.*

Paul Rotha on
The Good Short

The good short demands as much skill and production value as a good feature. In the space of two reels every foot must be packed with action. There is no time for dawdling; no time for lengthy "art" effects. Tempo and continuity must be fast.

If you think of it, twenty minutes of celluloid is a long time. To use that time properly, either to tell a story or to put across a real-life subject, demands a great skill and experience of movie construction. The Mack Sennett comedies were among the best things that movies have given us. Disney's cartoons are often marvels of construction, from which the writers of feature films might learn a lot. And most of our British documentaries have a tempo and scenario construction lacking from our big studio creations.

It is important to remember, I think, that most of the technicians working in the documentary field are *interested* in the making of short films. To their credit they have no illusions that their films are world-shattering super-pictures. They have decided to learn the job of making a particular kind of film, and are content in that job.

Alfred Hitchcock on
The real spirit of England

British Film Producers know only two strata of English existence, the poor and the rich. On these they base the plots of their films which go out to the kinemas of the world, conveying the expression to other audiences that the English live in either cottages or cocktail cabinets, and speak with their lips twisted or with a plum in their throats.

Totally ignored by British film-makers is that vital central stratum of British humanity, the middle class. Forgotten are the men who leap on 'buses, the girls who pack in the Tube, the commercial travellers, the newspaper men, the girls who manicure your nails, the composers who write the dance numbers, the city clerk and his week-end Rugger, the stockbroker and his round of golf, the typist and her boy-friend, the kinema queues, the palais de danse crowds, the people in the charabancs, on the beaches, at the race-courses, the fellows who love gardening, the chaps who lounge in pubs, the secretaries of clubs, the chorus girls, the doctors, the car salesmen, the speed cops, the school teachers.

In them lies the spirit of England that, for some unknown reason, is almost entirely ignored on the screen. American producers have not halted where we have stood still. They have exploited the drama of their people and made it a feature of eight out of ten of their films. If we in this country only got our education from the screen, we should know more of the life of a middle-class American than we do of the English people who fill our trains and trams at rush hours.

The higher you run your finger up the British social scale, the faster the drama dies. The veneer of civilisation is so thick among the rich that individual qualities are killed. There is nothing to film, nothing worth putting on the screen. Voices are the same, expressions are *nil*, personalities are suppressed. The upper classes are too "bottled up" to be of any use as colourful screen material, too stiffened with breeding to relax into the natural easiness and normality required by the screen.

But come downwards into that more colourful belt of beings, the middle class, and observe their unhampered attitude of life. . . . Here are people who smile and mean it. Here are expressions that come swiftly and naturally without restraint, here are manners and ways flowing easily, speech unaffected, emotions more free, instinct sharper. In other words, here is grand camera stuff waiting at the Industry's door.—*Kine Weekly.*

Paul Rotha—*(contd.)*

This is one reason why the documentary film units have built up loyalties and team spirit, so essential for the production of a continuance of good films.

It is true that some forthcoming documentaries look like running to second feature length, because their subjects are big enough to demand a wide canvas, as in Shaw's *The Future's in the Air*, which has the whole of the Empire Air Routes and the Transatlantic Flights to play with. But the major part of our documentary films is one- and two-reeler work.—*Kine Weekly.*

At the beginning of each year the cinema trade papers—*Kine*, *Renter*, and *Cinema*—produce their annual numbers. Fat and gaudy with company announcements, they are also rich mines of opinion; for anyone and everyone in the film world is consulted on what he thought of last year and what he dreams for next. It is from the annual numbers these excerpts are cut, and we take this opportunity of congratulating our fellow editors on more brilliant issues than ever before.

Marion Grierson
(Editor W.F.N.)

Ned Depinet, R.K.O., President, on
Catering for the Cultured

The best thing happening for the industry during 1936, in my opinion, was the large increase in attendance at the cinema theatres on the part of the more cultured people who appreciate fine entertainment. While our business has been built primarily on the appeal of motion pictures to the masses, and the most successful attractions have been those of very wide popular favour, additional profits are certain to accrue to producer, distributors and exhibitor as we further the interest of the more discriminating clientele who have in the past sought their entertainment to a great extent in other directions than at the cinema.

This has been accomplished during 1936 more than ever before by producers who have made pictures, which, while they have drawn the so-called habitual "fans," have been of such outstanding merit in theme, story, acting and patronage and applause of the intelligentsia.

The approach is by presenting better pictures, and then making sure that the more discerning element of the population is told about them.

One of the best things that could happen for the industry in 1937 would be a considerable advance in the study of motion pictures and of photoplay appreciation in the schools. I am aware that in England this development has not progressed to any extent, but it is something that your executives might well strive to foster.

In the United States. . . . At the present time upwards of 5,000 high schools teach photoplay as a regular part of the curriculum, and this number is being constantly increased. Educators have come to the conclusion that it is just as important to inculcate in the minds of the young an understanding and appreciation of fine motion pictures, as it is to have them study good literature or the best in music or art. This movement is creating a bigger and more discriminating advance for the future.

The Cinema.

Hollywood Story Conference

Smoke fills the room, smoke and pregnant silence. Ash-trays are heaped with tobacco stubs, shredded paper matches, and twisted and mangled wire clips. Scratch-paper, etched with strange, formless designs, litter the receptacles. Hands hold glowing cigarettes from which smoke curls and fills the room.

This is the office of the supervisor, the man who is producing the picture for the studio. He sits behind a massive desk piled with manuscripts, inter-office communications and other memoranda. Within reach is the dictaphone, which frequently interrupts and demands attention. A light on the machine flashes, he lowers a jigger, picks up the earpiece and listens. "Yes, D.R." he says, coming sharply out of his twilight sleep. "Ha? Who, D.R.? Him? Nah, I should say not! Not even fa buttons!" he hangs up and again blankets himself in lethargy.

He is an unhappy fellow, this supervisor, addicted to the habit of consuming generous quantities of bicarbonate of soda—straight. Ugh! (Some say the responsibility of producing a half dozen pictures a year brought about his nervous stomach. As a matter of fact, his jittering belly is the result of weathering three successive changes of régime. *You* would have dropped dead!)

There are many things troubling him—I mean, in addition to his pictures. He hasn't had time to discuss the blueprints of his new home with the architect. And Joycine has been raising holy hell with him again. "Fa Chri'sakes," she said only that morning, "if Robert Taylor, an actor, can give Barbara Stanwyck a star sapphire ring, it seemsta me that you, an execative, can give me a little somethin' fa the wrist! Jeezus, evveybody's commentin' how I'm wearin' last year's jewlerry!" Two grand he dropped a week ago over the tables of the Clover Club and Joycine is belly-aching about presents yet! That dizzy broad don't know from nothing!

In one corner, hiding behind his outstretched legs, sits the dialogue writer. He, too, has his troubles. He places imaginary pince-nez on his nose, an excuse for closing a pair of leaden peepers in great need of sleep. Why the hell doesn't he cut out this chasing around till four-five o'clock in the morning? No wonder he's all pooped out at these conferences. What wouldn't he give for

Suddenly the producer stirs and comes to life. "Fellas" he says "we're getting no place. Here we got a very inarresting situation . . . one thing we still got to figger out is why he's in love with her."

(With Acknowledgments to New Theatre)

eight solid hours of sleep! He removes his imaginary pince-nez and now shades his eyes with his hands to simulate profound contemplation. But this is another attempt to surrender to slumber's ineluctable powers.

In another corner sits the continuity writer, his pencil busily scratching at the yellow tablet he holds. He writes his name, again and again. He tires of this and writes his collaborator's name but quickly returns to his own. He is fairly happy, this continuity writer. He hasn't the troubles which beset the other two. All he has to worry about is getting some cash to the bank before it closes to cover the cheque he gave to Caretti for that case of Scotch. Life for him, you see, is comparatively simple.

Suddenly the producer stirs and comes to life. "Fellas," he says, rising and straightening his trousers, "we're getting no place. Here we got a very inarresting situation where Clyde is in love with Ellen. But the one thing we still got to figger out is why he's in love with her."

"It's simple," says the continuity writer. "He sees her wading in the stream, see? The wind is blowing against her dress, see? So he gets one hinge of those beautiful casabas and, mama, he goes for her hook, line and sinker. It's simple."

"I dunno," says the executive, giving his face a dry wash. "You think the audience will swallow that?"

"Swallow that? Fa Chri'sakes, wouldn't you go for some beautiful dame with a pair of wonderful jallapees way out to here?"

"I would," the supervisor is forced to admit. "I'm only wondering if the audience would, that's all."

And so follows a discussion of the story and the motives which impel the characters to behave as they do. It must be hard to believe, when one sees a film in which the players behave like congenital idiots, that their antics were carefully planned, that the situations in which they are involved were fully discussed and analysed, and yet that is exactly what occurs in these story conferences.

There is no limit to the number of participants in these office debates. I recall one such discussion on a picture called *Make Me A Star*, on which I was assigned. This item was based on *Merton of the Movies*, a highly successful stage-play which George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly adapted from the novel by Harry Leon Wilson. Paramount had previously made a silent version of that comedy.

Present at the story session were the producer, his aide, a continuity writer, a gag man, the director and his own idea man (I was told I was also in attendance). We argued, reasoned and fought for hours. Finally our troupe submitted a version which in turn was given to a new set of writers with ideas and story conferences of their own.

There is a strange alchemy which a story undergoes at these studio clinics. The writer and the producer may be wildly enthusiastic about an idea, but after a series of these frenzied interviews compromises are made. What once seemed gay and bright by a series of almost imperceptible changes becomes dull and leaden (the writer doesn't know—self-hypnosis has set in).

I don't believe there is a single screen playwright (the phrase belongs to Celluloidia) who consciously writes down for the movies or who deliberately palms off a meretricious script because of his contempt for the medium. Writers may whine and complain and yammer about Hollywood, but like our citizens who criticise this country, none of them wants to "go back where you came from."

CHANGING ATTITUDE

And there is no reason why he should. The screen is an eloquent and powerful medium of self-expression. But because he has the enforced collaboration of a story-room savant with arbitrary ideas (who employ an army of writers, if necessary, to translate *his* ideas), the writer's position becomes as horizontal as the lady in the red kimono who also performs a service.

There are refreshing signs, however, of a change in the attitude of the studio towards its creative forces. Columbia discovered that a good writer and a good director, if left alone, could make a damned good picture. And thus Robert Riskin and Frank Capra were permitted to make many highly delightful films, among them *It Happened One Night* and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*.

Dudley Nichols and John Ford were another writer-director team who received the minimum amount of studio interferences. They therefore have to their credit *The Informer*, one of the best pictures to come out of Hollywood.

There have been other very successful marriages of writers and directors. Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, working with director Howard Hawks, have contributed such exciting screen entertainment as *Scarface*, *Twentieth Century* and *Viva Villa*. (You'll never convince me that *The Barbary Coast*, employing the same combination, wasn't whipped up by MacArthur's seven-year-old daughter.)

STRIP-TEASE ROUTINES

Hecht and MacArthur, however, made a miserable failure of their own producing unit. They had a magnificent opportunity to advance the status of the screen-writer, to show that studio overseers were superfluous, and instead they botched it by such inept and incompetent charades as *Soak the Rich*, *Once in a Blue Moon* and *The Scoundrel*. These superannuated juveniles were busy playing executives when they should have been playing writers. And their appearance in their own pictures marks the nadir of elfin exhibitionism.

Paramount realises the efficacy of these writer-director teams. In fact Ernst Lubitsch, the Gypsy Rose Lee of directors, has produced most successfully when doing his strip-tease routines with Samson Raphaelson. Paramount is the home of other writer-director teams: Claude Binyon and Wesley Ruggles, Clifford Odets and Lewis Milestone, Howard Esterbrook and Frank Lloyd, Grover Jones and Henry Hathaway.

However, these writer-director combinations are rare. At present, smoke fills the room, smoke and—Hell, this is where you came in!

Arthur Kober

Theda Bara—Early screen Juliet

WILL SHAKESPEARE AN OLD HAND AT SCENARIOS

Thirty-six years and forty-seven film versions of Shakespeare's Plays

"Could do a sympathy part when called upon"

Corin and Touchstone, "As You Like It"

WITH MUCH BEATING of the showman's drum three screen versions of Shakespeare's plays were shown last year: *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

To the bystander this "Shakespearean cycle" in the movies looks like a new phenomenon. Critics, too, seem to regard it as unprecedented. As one of them puts it, Shakespeare has passed his screen test. But to those New York research writers, engaged in compiling a Critical Bibliography of the Film in America, all this is old stuff.

To them *As You Like It* is merely the forty-seventh in a long series of film versions of Shakespeare, most of which were made during the first 15 years of the century. In fact something far closer to a genuine Shakespearean cycle in the film occurred 25 years ago, when 14 productions of 12 different Shakespearean plays were released in 1910–11.

To be scrupulously exact, Shakespeare's screen test was passed, not in 1936, but early in 1900, when Sarah Bernhardt was presented in a "talking" picture of the duel scene from *Hamlet*. (To be sure the talking was reproduced separately on an Edison cylinder record, but it was there nevertheless.)

And that little excerpt was almost literally a screen test rather than a film version of Shakespeare. It was only with the period beginning in 1903 when the movies, no longer content with the depiction of the waves breaking on the shores of Dover, had turned to real plots, that producers marched in a body upon the classics generally and upon Shakespeare in particular. In the flood of productions that followed, 14 of the plays were filmed in 5 different countries, several of them in coloured versions, featuring a variety of "big names," ranging from Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree to Theda Bara.

When Cæsar's short tunic was quoted as evidence of movies, immoral influence.

When Beerbohm Tree played Macbeth and Sarah Bernhardt Hamlet.

In fact, in 1911 Shakespeare on the screen was so much a matter of fact that parodies were in order. Beginning with *Romeo and Juliet in Town* (Selig-Polyscope), they reached the all-time high (or low) of *Mike Capulet vs. Pete Montague—How They Fought at the Quarry* (Biograph slapstick, 1914).

Following is a chronological list of the screen versions of Shakespeare's plays in the order of frequency :

Romeo and Juliet, made 7 times, in whole or part, between 1908 and 1936.
Hamlet, 6 times, between 1900 and 1915.
Merchant of Venice, 5 times, between 1901 and 1921.
Midsummer Night's Dream, 4 times between 1909 and 1935.
Macbeth, 4 times between 1908 and 1916.
King Lear, 3 times between 1909 and 1916.
The Tempest, 3 times between 1910 and 1915.
Taming of the Shrew, 3 times between 1908 and 1929.
Othello, 3 times between 1910 and 1932.
Antony and Cleopatra, 3 times between 1910 and 1914.
Julius Cæsar, twice, 1905, 1909.
As You Like It, twice, 1910, 1936.
Merry Wives of Windsor, once, 1910.
Twelfth Night, once, 1910.

AS YOU LIKE IT: The only film version of this play prior to the Bergner production is thus listed in a "Catalogue of Educational Motion Pictures" (1910): "This famous comedy of Shakespeare, done out of doors by a very competent company. 915 feet. Lease price—$118.95."

MERCHANT OF VENICE: A "grand recitation, with 10 exquisite coloured slides," was offered for sale by Harbach and Co., film and photographic supply dealers, in September and October, 1901. Price—$5.

ROMEO AND JULIET: The one-reel version made by Vitagraph in 1908 was advertised as "the only Shakespearean tragedy written around a love story. . . Filmed in Central Park . . . magnificently staged, gorgeously costumed and provided with numerous scenes which were beautifully tinted."

Hollywood Collaborators. "But surely, Mr. Shakespeare, you will admit that two heads are better than one ! . . ."
A Will Dyson cartoon from "Modern Caricatures."

The two-reel version made by Thanhauser in 1911 drew the following effusion in the Motion Picture World : "It is creditable to the makers of the present film that each of the reels tells a story of its own; one of the love story, the other, the tragedy. As the reels were issued at different times, this will help the exhibitor. Some day it is hoped an arrangement will be made which allows of such productions being released at the same time, the only sensible and logical way. . . ."

In a coloured version made by Pathé in 1913 Juliet is betrothed to Tybalt and the character of Paris is omitted entirely.

The two productions made in 1916 (by Quality-Metro and Fox) starred respectively, Francis X. Bushman, Beverly Bayne, Harry Bayne, Harry Hilliard and Theda Bara. Of the latter a reviewer said, "I know that she could do a sympathy part when called upon."

Excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet* appeared in *Morning Glory*, with Katharine Hepburn, and in *Hollywood Revue of* 1929, with Norma Shearer.

TAMING OF THE SHREW: This seems to have been regarded, at least by the critics, as a moral disquisition. Of the Biograph production in 1908, a reviewer says, ". . . it is indeed an object lesson, teaching us to see ourselves as others see us." And of the Urban-Eclipse version in 1911, a different critic remarks, "This Katherine of Shakespeare is a standing sign-mark for parents who permit early indulgence by their girls and who are careless of their education."

THE TEMPEST: The first production was a filming of a stage presentation by Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree. Of it a critic says, "This remarkable production taken under the ordinary conditions of stage lighting during representation, illustrates the great advances in animated photography which the motion picture camera has rendered possible. The shipwreck with all its intense realism is reproduced with startling detail. The lightnings flash, the billows leap and roll and break. . . . The film is issued tinted to the suitable weird moonlight colour. . . ."

OTHELLO: Another example of the popularity of the coloured film in the early days. The first screen version, made by Pathé Film d'Art in 1910, was in colour.

MACBETH: The Pathé production released in 1910 was blurbed in the Pathé catalogue as follows : "In order to do justice to the masterpiece of this great writer, the best French actors were employed to take the leading parts. . . ."

The Triangle 8-reel production starring Beerbohm Tree (1916), is described as "the most archaeologically correct version of Shakespeare's tragedy ever made anywhere."

HAMLET: Many of the earlier *Hamlets* seem to have been in name only. The one made by Meliés in 1908 begins with the graveyard scene and is devoted largely to attempts to emphasise Hamlet's madness. Similarly the production by Asta Films, in 1921, "employs the theory that Hamlet was a woman and was in love with Horatio. . . . ."

JULIUS CÆSAR: The first version, made in 1905, is titled "Shakespeare Writing Julius Cæsar." It showed "the author in his study trying to write the scene of Cæsar's murder. Suddenly his thoughts take life and right before him appears an old Roman forum. Shakespeare sits in his armchair and watches all that occurs. . . ."

Another production of his play achieved prominence in 1909, when in a discussion of censorship a "Reverend Gentleman" is quoted as having cited the shortness of Cæsar's tunic to prove that movies were an immoral influence.

Beerbohm Tree as Macbeth

By LANCELOT HOGBEN, PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS AT LONDON UNIVERSITY;
Author of "MATHEMATICS FOR THE MILLION"

IF THE COST OF ONE CRUISER . . .

"If the cost of one cruiser were applied to providing projectors for our schools and the expense of two battleships were devoted to the production of films for the teaching of science, this generation could witness a greater advance of human enlightenment than the world has yet seen."

(By arrangement with the National Union of Teachers.)

THE PROBLEMS OF education reconstruction in our own time are as urgent and as singular as those of the Protestant Reformation. The material circumstance which contributed to the great intellectual enlightenment of that time was the invention of a new instrument for diffusing human knowledge. In our own task of making the world outlook of science an open Bible we have at our disposal instruments which transcend the limitations of oral discourse. It is commonplace to say that the cinema has placed new powers in the hands of the educationalist but few educationalists have really grasped what its new powers are. So far the cinema has largely been canvassed as a way of stimulating interest or of conveying in a more vivid and palatable form information which is less attractive when communicated through the medium of print. What we have still to realise is that it can explain many things which many people can never understand at all, if they have to rely on the printed word.

Many people think that the great obstacle to the understanding of science is its reliance on mathematical symbolism. I do not believe that this is true. It is my view that the greatest difficulties both in mathematics and in those branches of science which rely on mathematics do not reside in failure to assimilate the rules of symbolism. More often they reside in failure to visualise the physical construction, model or process which the symbols describe. Cinema can bridge the gulf which now separates people who have a good visual imagination from those who have not.

Limits of the printed word

Dynamics and astronomy are not difficult because they make use of difficult branches of mathematics. To the person who finds them difficult they are equally difficult when the mathematics used is of the simplest kind. The limitation imposed upon the communication of knowledge by the printing press is easiest to see if we consider the implications of a well-known class of optical illusions. All of you know what happens if you draw a cube in perspective with twelve straight lines and then stare at it for some time. After a little while it seems to turn inside out and this happens repeatedly if you go on staring at it. Although this class of optical illusions is commonly mentioned in text-books of physiology and experimental psychology, little if anything has been said about its bearing on education. Every teacher knows perfectly well that many children who can acquit themselves passably in plain geometry experience very great difficulty when they come to solid geometry. This fact is not surprising in the light of the experiment I have cited. There is an inherent ambiguity in flat representations of three-dimensional objects. The longer you go on looking at them the more perplexed you get.

The fourth dimension

Of course, the experienced teacher knows that a little play with plasticine and knitting needles will often surmount the first difficulties of visualisation at this level. What the model does for the three-dimensional object the cinema would do for the four-dimensional process. Simple harmonic motion, the precession of the equinoxes, the relation of celestial and terrestrial co-ordinates of a star, wave motions, the trajectory of a body projected in space, are themes which present insuperable difficulties to a large number of people. They bristle with problems for the teacher, even if he only has to deal with pupils who have a tolerable aptitude for naturalistic studies. With all the resources of stereoscopic cinematography, I believe that a few hours would suffice to overcome visual difficulties which now defeat the ingenuity of the teacher and at best absorb weeks and months of time and effort.

Bacon said that it is unwise to exalt the powers of the human mind when we should seek out its true helps. There are many to-day who would have us exalt the minds of leaders with supposedly superior gifts. The task of educationists must be to emphasise the new helps which science has brought to the understanding of the common man. Distrust of education and a pessimistic attitude towards the powers of the average citizen in our generation are the seeds of fascism and war. If the cost of one cruiser were applied to providing projectors for our schools and the expense of two battleships were devoted to the production of films for the teaching of science, this generation could witness a greater advance of human enlightenment than the world has yet seen. This is national ground for hopefulness in the dark hours through which Europe is now passing.

FIGHTING

"Twenty-five stations have been set up by universities and similar bodies."

AMERICAN BROADCASTING is so different from ours that it is not easy to draw any sort of parallel. There are seven hundred stations: a proportion of them are linked into the two great networks, but most of the seven hundred are independent and small, and have only a local range. Some sort of central control of them is exercised by a Federal Commission, but the protection of public interests which this body affords is seemingly of a negative kind, and the Commission does not seem to have the right to appropriate radio-time (which in America belongs to whoever can pay most for it) for such non-commercial projects as education. Presumably the government could *buy* time for education from the stations, but it is easy to see that there simply would not be enough money to pay for it. For while a newspaper, for instance, can be enlarged under advertising pressure to almost any size, no amount of pressure or petition can extend broadcasting hours beyond the natural limit of 24 per day. Thus competition simply forces the prices up, for there is nothing else that it can increase. Again, while almost any educational body can afford to start its own press-organ, only the wealthiest can afford to start new broadcasting stations.

Even so, twenty-five stations have been set up by universities and similar bodies, and although they are poorly equipped and understaffed they have managed to do good work in child study and in the study of broadcasting technique. But the great majority of education bodies (civic groups, women's clubs, farmers, workers, religious groups) have to beg time from their local station, and content themselves with whatever old unsold periods the stations can throw to them when the advertisers' demands have been met.

Since the advertisers choose their own programme and base them on mass-appeal, it is easy to see that the whole system places the cultural minorities completely at the mercy of the majority in the matter of broadcast material. This is so far from being true in Britain, that the

FOR AIR—*RADIO PROBLEMS IN AMERICA*

"But the majority of education bodies have to beg time from their local station, and content themselves with whatever unsold periods the stations can throw to them when the advertisers' demands have been met."

B.B.C. is constantly being accused of catering for the select few and neglecting the multitudes.

A fair amount of the material broadcast in America, nevertheless, appears to be of considerable educational value. Controversial discussion (unrehearsed), running commentary, actuality broadcasts, news, physical instruction, cookery talks, fall into the category of educational material which has mass appeal, and the Americans are proud of the way they present such matters. It is specific educational projects, adult and school which have the minority appeal and are consequently shouldered out of the air.

Dissatisfied with the stream of entertainment (vaudeville, serial play, symphony concert, recital, etc.) eighteen national groups of social workers have had a conference, attempting to find a way of getting education its rightful share of radio time. This conference was held in co-operation with the United States Office of Education, and is reported by Keith Tyler, of the Bureau of Educational Research, Ohio State University.

Federal assistance

Up till now they have had their hands full with this problem, which is still unsolved, and likely to remain unsolved. To help them they have the services of a Federal Committee made up from two Government departments, Education and Communications. This body has embarked upon a "long-term programme" to try to find a way of "getting Education its place on the air." The difficulties are recognised as well-nigh insurmountable.

Similarly though two great national education groups have succeeded in keeping a "You and Your Government" series on the network for years, it has been very difficult, because of time-shifts and uncertainties in programmes. Naturally when a station has to sell its time, it makes room for later purchasers of time by transferring non-paying broadcasters to other hours, or cutting them out altogether. This constant chopping and changing of available hours makes it quite impossible to organise anything like a national service of educational material. The most that educationists dare hope is that they may use up all the odd periods available by making records of educational material and distributing them to stations for use at odd times. The major problem of getting a real share of the time remains unsolved.

Even if it were solved, the problem of presentation would remain, for the stations would have to leave it to the educators. With some optimism the educators are addressing themselves to their task and arranging exchange of technical suggestions.

Financial pressure

The conclusion reached by the conference is that the radio has great educational possibilities, but that under the pressure of financial concerns it is almost impossible to hope that radio will be used in America for educational ends. Nevertheless, they "are resolved."

Of course, there is another side to the story. The broadcasting stations have their point of view. It must not be thought that all the programme-time is sold to advertisers. It seems indeed that only about 25 per cent of radio time is actually taken up with advertising programmes. The remaining 75 per cent of the time is filled by the companies themselves, who are concerned with keeping their stations on the air at as low a cost as is consistent with good entertainment, and at the same time broadcasting material which in their view is likely to attract advertisers to sponsor this or that attractive item or hour. And we must not assume that all the material so broadcast is low-brow, raucous, blaring, or otherwise offensive to the refined listener.

Indeed the big networks have their own education departments. These are concerned with the broadcasting of lectures and talks of an instructive nature, miscellaneous and heterogeneous, rather than the presentation of a definitely planned and rounded schedule, at definite hours of the day. At the same time the more responsible companies no doubt have their own conception of what radio-education ought to be, a conception which, we may guess, combines wide appeal with brightness or stunt-interest, so as to merit the term education and yet attract possible sponsors.

In their somewhat difficult task they find themselves set upon at all points by sectional interests which covet the radio time so used, and it seems to the companies that a good many of the clubs and societies which press upon them are log-rollers and axe-grinders who want radio time for what they choose to call education, but what is really nothing more than commercial advertising of an indirect nature. It is easy to see that in many instances the companies may do well to fight shy of such pressure. Add to the financial complications the fact that a fair proportion of these clubs and societies are cranks, composed of people who have too little to do in the afternoons, and set about the reforming the world. So they appear to the companies at any rate, who are disposed to blame home labour-saving devices for most of their troubles, for such devices set women free to form clubs and sob-sister-societies, and to badger innocent radio companies for free time for their unspeakably silly projects. Fortunately for the radio interests, the multifarious societies and clubs cancel each other out to some extent, and can be played off against one another; in any case their attack on the radio companies only now begins to show signs of organised unanimity.

So on the one hand, according to the sob-sisters we have the bad barons of radio, closely affiliated to the big-business interests, making radio the servant of Mammon, wickedly resenting and resisting any attempt to bring sweetness and light into American homes.

On the other hand, according to the radio companies, we have a heterogeneous collection of faddists and cranks constantly pestering hard-working radio officials with so-called educational projects which at worst are underhand attempts to steal radio time for commercial use, and at best are just scatterbrained attempts to broadcast a lot of flapdoodle, boloney, applesauce, and other American specialties.

Quite probably both views are correct.

Searchlight on Life

The films of Gaumont-British Instructional

NOBODY OF MY acquaintance has ever seen a Gaumont-British Instructional Nature study without being at the same time impressed and delighted. It is not the technical qualities of the film, the sumptuous photography and rich pictorial effect, the lucid and well-planned exposition and commentary, that make the appeal. It is the intrinsic value of the subject matter; the light shed by the film upon something that is real, often commonplace indeed, as in *Earthworms*, something that we see every day, something so obvious that we pass it by; or in other cases, something so infinitely large or small that human eyes cannot see it; but real, true, authentic, and exposed or expounded in such a way as to bring out all its fascinating interest.

Any librarian of books will testify that to-day there is a growing public for non-fiction. It is obvious from the success of certain documentaries and interest films the public for non-fiction films is also growing. The birth of this type of film was long delayed and its progress has been slow, on account of conditions peculiar to the cinema art and industry, but it is clear that an acceleration is ahead. It is just at this point, then, that the services of a unit like G.B.I. are most valuable. This review is a tribute to their invaluable services rendered and promised, for they have not only succeeded in building up an impressive library of which the Secrets of Life series is only a part, but have undertaken further commitments of an even more impressive order. The G.B.I. film library is wide in its range and varied in its subject matter and treatment, but the G.B.I. staff persist in regarding it merely as a nucleus.

The geography films, for instance, number 25 reels on British Regional Geography alone, with further films on the geography of the West Indies and India. The talking film can show and describe anything which can be shown and described; and a good non-fiction film has the quality of permanence in two senses of the word: not only will it keep for all time, but it will interest for all time. Fully alive to these considerations, G.B.I. regard their medium as an instrument not only for art and instruction, but also for recording, and they project an Empire Film Survey which will include all the British Dominions, India, and Great Britain. So far as they have gone, they have shown how the world can be brought into the theatre and the classroom.

"Fish Face"

The Natural History series at present runs to more than 50 subjects. The latest ones, supervised by Dr. Julian Huxley and Mr. Hewer, are achievements in exposition. *Earthworm* is already in a fair way to become a classic. The earlier ones which have been round the theatres are remembered with pleasure, mixed with regret, as far as my acquaintances are concerned, that we have not seen more of them, and oftener. They are, for the most part, available in two forms: popular or purely instructional; or, as some would say, easy or hard. This policy of making a theatre version is a wise one for the material is too valuable, in many cases too beautiful, to be cast exclusively in text-book form. Further adventures in knowledge and interest are promised us.

Physical training and sport form another section. Nine films on swimming and diving, and a whole series on physical training designed for the use of teachers with valuable work on posture and carriage. The work is being continued on a big scale in collaboration with physical training organisations throughout the country.

Only a beginning has been made with agricultural films, but the quality of the work in this, as in all other sections is such that the films would be welcome in any programme, in the schools and in the theatres alike.

Some of the most interesting experimental work of G.B.I. is in the field of history. G.B.I.'s use of diagrams in history and

"Ship Yard"

Adventures in Life, Nature and Knowledge

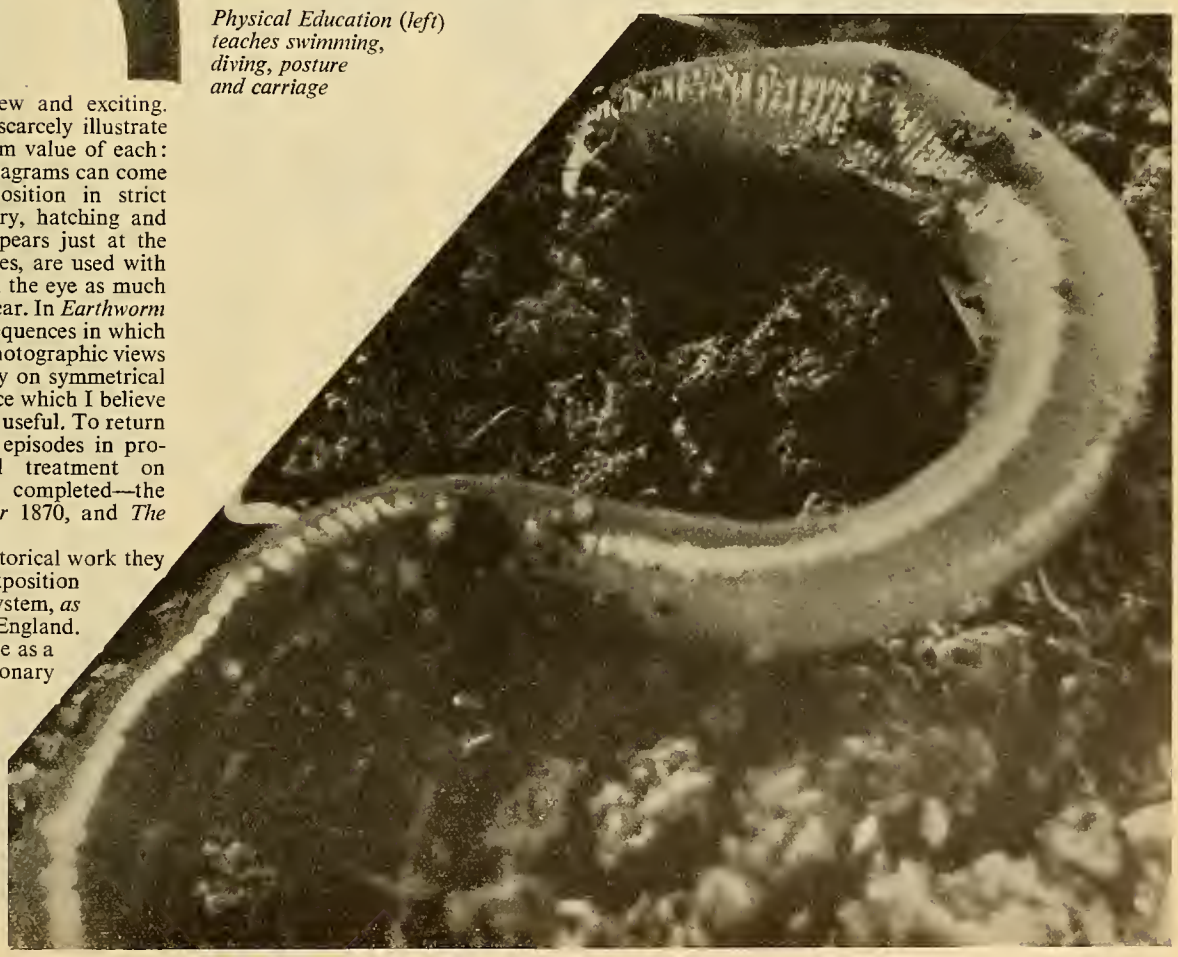
geography is something new and exciting. The examples here shown scarcely illustrate more than the plain diagram value of each: but cinematically treated, diagrams can come to life; arrows change position in strict unison with the commentary, hatching and shading appears and disappears just at the right moment. Labels, names, are used with such skill that diagrams tell the eye as much as the commentary tells the ear. In *Earthworm* and *Sea-Urchin*, there are sequences in which the diagrammatic and the photographic views are presented simultaneously on symmetrical halves of the subject, a device which I believe is as novel as it is obviously useful. To return to history, six subjects, or episodes in production, for experimental treatment on diagram lines. Two are completed—the *Expansion of Germany after* 1870, and *The Growth of British Railways*.

The most illuminating historical work they have yet done is a beautiful exposition of the mediæval three-fold system, *as it survives to-day* in rural England. This piece of work struck me as a *tour de force*; quite revolutionary in History teaching.

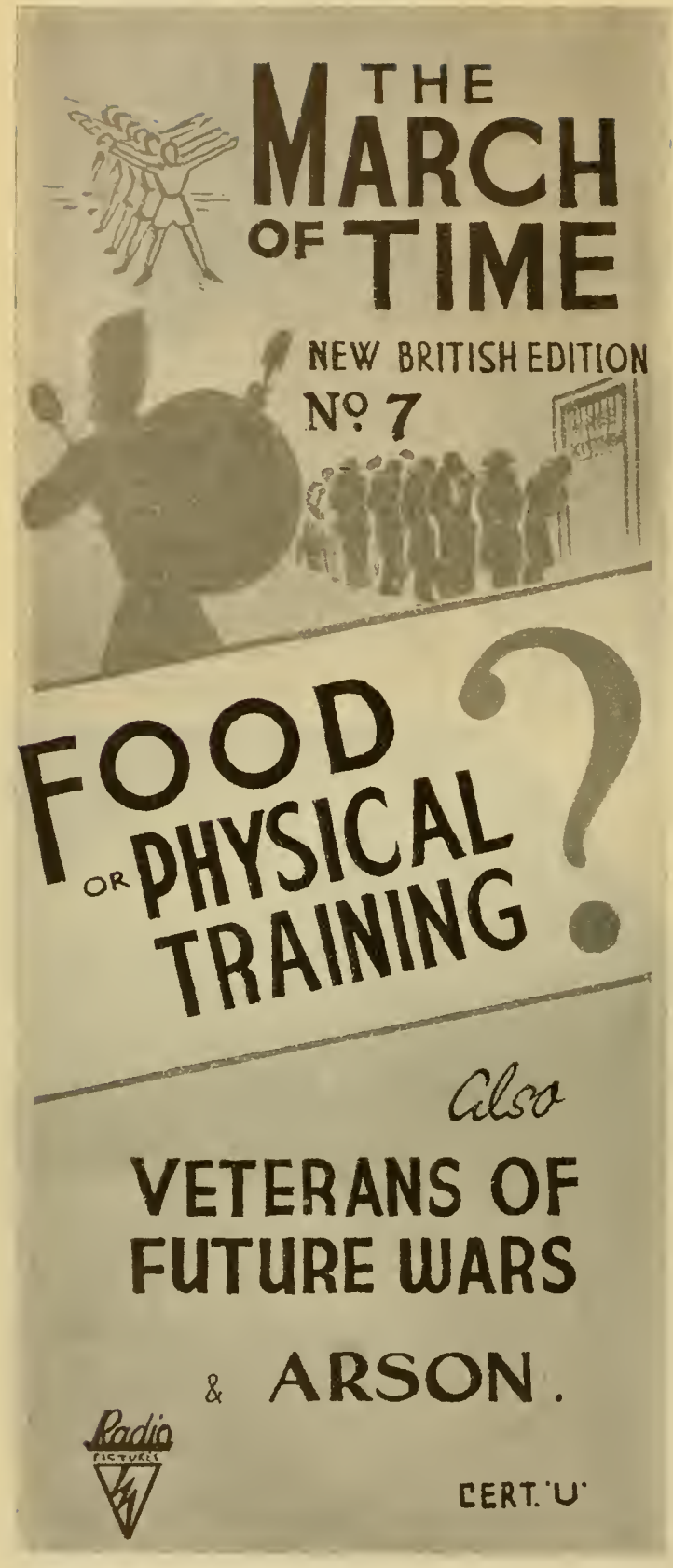
Mediæval Village gives a welcome shock by showing the past existing in the present. If G.B.I. can tackle other institutions in the same way as in the brilliant little essay on land tenure, it may well found a new and extremely valuable series of social criticisms. I have left to the last the project which I understand is the ambition of G.B.I. It is no less than to create a reference library of film, for the use of schools and lecture societies, universities and colleges. The present library may be regarded as resembling a lending library of books—(non-fiction, of course, for film fiction does not keep). What they look forward to creating in the course of time is a film encyclopædia. And they have access to a great deal of material for such a work in the fiction productions of their own company. We all know that a good deal of careful research and reconstruction goes into the making of a responsible fiction film. For instance a real harpsichord, or amphora, or coat of mail may well be seen in a completely false and ephemeral story. So the time may come when you will be able to ring up G.B.I. and ask them to send you a burnous, or a Chinese mandarin, or a viol de gamboys, or an early Italian music box, or an Arab steed, and the request will be answered, and the film will show you what you wanted to see, flying, nodding, playing, talking, ticking or galloping as the case may be.

This is a fascinating possibility.

Physical Education (left) teaches swimming, diving, posture and carriage



"Earthworm" (right) reveals miracles in the commonplace



LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 1200 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport, Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston.
Synod Hall ...	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maidenhead.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Stratford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation ...	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork.
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth.
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz	Doncaster.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

EDITED BY H. E. BLYTH

'All Quiet' Re-issued—Review of the Month

ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT. (Revival.) (Lewis Milestone—Universal.)
Louis Wolheim, Lew Ayres, John Wray.

All Quiet on the Western Front is one of the greatest films ever made, and one that has lost little of its force or stark eloquence in the six years since it first appeared.

Its revival is timely, There must be many thousands who missed the original showing, or who have grown to maturity since. It is a film which ought to be part of every citizen's mental heritage—of every boy who finds his pulses responding to the throb of drum and bugle, of every girl who has it in her power to taunt her menfolk into fighting. More than any other film yet made, it shows the complete futility and filth of war. It is, as a critic has written, "for the people the complete representation of the war passion, and if it does not convince them of the stupidity and cowardice of mass destruction, nothing will this side death."

The condition of the copy cannot obscure the greatness of the film.

Maxwell Anderson, who has since written *Winterset**, possibly the finest play of the contemporary stage, was responsible for the scenario, and although he had to deal with an episode and graphically-written work, he has given the scattered incidents—the incident of Kemmerich's boots, for instance, of the dialogue about the causes of war, or the scene with the coffin in the graveyard, or the scene with the dying Frenchman in the shell-hole—he has given all these their due importance, and yet kept the main design of the film moving from the first shot to the last "with one increasing purpose."

From the opening scenes of the schoolroom—with the schoolmaster mouthing the same old wicked words we can still hear about us to-day—it moves through the great scenes of bombardment and attack, of reaction, disillusion, comradeship, loss, to that poignant ending (marred only by the following ghost images that Laemmle foisted on the film against Milestone's will), where we see Paul's hand reaching out for the butterfly in the sun, and the sniper taking aim through his telescopic sights.

Milestone, as Paul Rotha has pointed out, is at his best when he is dealing in terms of pure cinema and building suspense by his cutting, as in this sequence. It is in the direction of the players—and the miscasting of some of them, such as Beryl Mercer—that the weaknesses of the film may be found.

Cinematically, the peak of the film is the first French attack. If any young man wants to be a film director, let him see this film every night this week and analyse that sequence shot by shot—the overhead tracking shot down the German trench, the view of No-Man's Land through which the attack will come, the Germans waiting expectant, the French appearing through the smoke, the camera tracking with them, cutting back to the Germans still waiting.

The cutting grows faster and faster. The suspense is terrific. A German machine-gun opens fire and mows down the advancing troops. The camera follows its arc of death from left to right across the screen. Shot is piled on vivid shot. And then the counter-attack—the camera movements all reversed (even the machine-gun, manned by the French, now swivelling right to left), so that the relationship between French and Germans is always perfectly clear—"quite unconsciously to the audience, but definitely calculated by Milestone," says Rotha, "the conflict between the two sides is expressed by the movement of the camera."

—Frank Evans,
The Newcastle Evening Chronicle

*See reviews on next page.

"Born to Dance"

BORN TO DANCE. (Roy Del Ruth—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
Eleanor Powell, James Stewart, Virginia Bruce, Una Merkel, Sid Silvers.

Born to Dance is a glittering, swift and riotous musical show, packed with all Hollywood's lavishness, culminating in a preposterous super-finale aboard a battleship. Sailors ashore at night-clubs make love, dodge discipline and fall in love at short notice; and Eleanor Powell heads the cast with her astonishing stepping. Miss Powell has my unstinted admiration, but after ten minutes of her pedal agility I feel inclined to say: "Yes, that's all right; I'll admit you're the world's greatest tap dancer, even if you do keep your mouth open so much. How about a little wit?" For the humour is not in the dialogue, and the romance is pretty crude. The pace and sweep of the whole thing carries it along to its hectic success. —P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

There couldn't be any film better suited to cheer you than *Born to Dance*. Personally I had such a good time at it that I can imagine myself, palsied and ancient, looking back upon it with the same sort of sentimental regard which I have now for that great show of years ago—a mere stage production, of course—called *Funny Face*. I am inclined to think that this *Born to Dance* is fated to some such high place in the annals. There isn't anything eccentric, reticent, or experimental about this film. Hollywood has used its pet tricks and has let itself go in the way it likes to in the matter of colossal sets and lots of people and lots of noise. But the thing isn't just big; it indicates wisdom and some sort of discretion.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

W.F.N. SELECTION

Zéro de Conduite	* * *
All Quiet on the Western Front	* *
Winterset	* *
Born to Dance	* *
Sabotage	* *
Windbag the Sailor	*

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

All Quiet on the Western Front
Born to Dance
The Charge of the Light Brigade
Winterset
Go West, Young Man
Love From a Stranger
The Garden of Allah
Windbag the Sailor
The Country Cousin
Sabotage
Land Without Music
Zéro de Conduite
Fear
Confetti
The Circus
La Tendre Ennemie

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE. (Michael Curtiz—Warner Brothers.)
Erroll Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, Patric Knowles, Henry Stephenson, C. Henry Gordon.

Children who expect to see history accurately re-enacted should be warned beforehand that they are going to see nothing of the kind. They will, on the other hand, see a great deal of beautifully photographed, brilliantly directed, proudly characterised fiction—full of fine sentiment and fine sword-play, of courage under fire, bitter enmity under provocation, and sand under foot. They will, in the charge of the Six Hundred, see a military manœuvre more splendidly conceived than any I have witnessed on the screen. The glitter of lowered lances, the scudding thunder of hoof and heavy gun, the rally, the revenge, the silver mutiny of trumpets—all are sufficient to persuade the most ardent pacifist of war's undoubted glamour.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

The hypnotic effect is perfect. You find yourself saying each character's speeches just before he opens his mouth. It all follows and leads as beautifully, as comforting, as secure as logic, as certain as, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. It is as satisfying as *Bengal Lancers*, as faithful as *Under Two Flags*. You are willingly hypnotised, and each time the trance is deeper, because you have comfortably given up suspicion, you know the litany, you know the ritual will never be betrayed. That's the movie in its most essential form; it's just a punk picture and I like it.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

The more vigorous aspects of Warner's *The Charge of the Light Brigade* will be filmed in Mexico, whither a unit of the Michael Curtiz Company is scheduled to head from Hollywood next Sunday. The major shots of the famous charge have been made within fifty miles of the studio, but because of the anticipated injury and death rate among the animal chargers in the remaining sequences, it was deemed advisable to go to Mexico, where horseflesh is cheap and there is no American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. M.G.M. was compelled to resort to a similar departure in an animal picture last year.

—News item from *The New York Times*.

June 15th, 1936

WINTERSET. (Alfred Santell—RKO Radio.)
Burgess Meredith, Margo, Eduardo Ciannelli, John Carradine.

Just as a picture, *Winterset* is superb, a great, sombre pleasure. As a picture, the story is more effective than it was as a play, because this is exactly the thing that the movies can do on the grand scale. It's a beautiful piece of work. I think also that you can say that it's a beautiful piece of work in other ways, too. I suppose *Winterset* belongs to the category of underworld films. The public that wants its underworld films straight may be disappointed. Perhaps this film won't be a smash hit because it's so clearly a quality picture. Personally, if only for a change, I like a quality picture of low life, of killers, thieves, and such folk. The girl, Margo, is very good indeed, and the distraught judge, the various racketeers, with their guns and grey fedoras, the cops, the vagrants, the whole wretched crew, make a thorough picture, which you can call, in one of your lyric moods, a kind of popular folk poem of Manhattan underworld life.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Winterset is a quest for truth, the determination of the son of a fearless liberal to prove his father innocent of the murder charge that sent him to his death years before. The cinema rationalises beautifully something that might otherwise have seemed oddly coincidental, the grouping of the central characters—bitter, vengeful Estrella; the hopeful, determined son, Mio, and the mentally over-wrought Judge Gaunt; variously motivated, but each anxiously seeking out the harried Garth Esdras, identified by witnesses as the driver of the murder car but never brought to testify, in that squalid dead end in the shadow of Brooklyn Bridge.

—J. T. M., *The New York Times*

"The Charge of the Light Brigade"

GO WEST, YOUNG MAN. (Henry Hathaway—Paramount.)
Mae West, Warren William, Randolph Scott.

Go West, Young Man marks the end of Mae West, Young Woman. She plays the part of a movie star whose car breaks down while she is making a "personal appearance" tour, and so finds herself in a village where she vamps a nice young man. Her hips swing as much as ever—"The Swing's the Thing" she seems to think, still—and she ogles and entices and vamps and seduces. But it is now out of date. Mae West belongs to the year 1935. Filmland has a new queen now. Her name is Shirley Temple.

—Hannen Swaffer, *The People*

It's a little sad about Mae West.

She came in with such a glorious swagger. Every line was whiplash, every glance from under those heavy lids a shaft of lightning. She was such fun. Pretending to represent flaming sex, she actually presented a devastatingly satirical comment on it.

But what a strain it has been to sustain that attitude.

This time she has taken a successful play, *Personal Appearance*, which satirises a film star, puffed up with publicity and with a vamping complex. There are moments of the old Mae, but not nearly enough. The strain has told on her. She must now make another *She Done Him Wrong*. Or else . . .

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

LOVE FROM A STRANGER. (Rowland V. Lee—Trafalgar Films.)
Ann Harding, Basil Rathbone, Binnie Hale.

The story is the sort of straight, unshaded thing that the films do well. A young business girl wins a fortune in a lottery, and is immediately pursued by a fascinating stranger. Foolishly, she marries him. Even more foolishly, she signs her money over to him. At the last minute, in a locked, lonely house, she discovers that he is a homicidal maniac, whose fancy is to murder his wives in a photographic dark room. The last twenty minutes is entirely devoted to the struggle of wits between these two. Ann Harding and Basil Rathbone overplay a little in the final conflict, but I'm not at all sure that it isn't what is wanted for the picture. The whole treatment of the climax is strained, overwrought, and hysterical; on the border-line between laughter and madness. There is one shot, when the wife throws open the last door to escape and finds her husband standing dead-still on the threshold, that hasn't been equalled for horror since Cagney's body fell through the doorway in *Public Enemy*.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

During the showing of *Love From a Stranger* a woman in the audience screamed! It wasn't just a choked gasp, or a high-pitched indrawn breath—but an honest-to-goodness yell of pure terror. And it was the most spontaneous tribute I have ever heard to the sinister personality of Basil Rathbone. It is Mr. Rathbone's film. . . . His study of the boastful maniac—urging on his passions with wild music, declaiming how much of a genius he is, then shaking with wild terror at the thought that the tables have at last been turned, is an amazing piece of acting. My sympathies are entirely with the lady who screamed.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

THE GARDEN OF ALLAH. (Richard Boleslawsky—Selznick International.)
Marlene Dietrich, Charles Boyer, Basil Rathbone, Tilly Losch, C. Aubrey Smith.

The warmth of the colouring is not sufficient compensation for the gloom of the story. One feels that the Trappist monk and the woman are an ill-matched couple and that it is just as well for both of them that he agrees to go back quietly to his cell. One thing is certain and that is that Technicolor has never been better utilised than to bring out the chromes and browns and distant blues of desert scenery and the vivid tints of sunsets. This is the most successful effort in colour photography yet produced. When Tilly Losch dances in the Arab café, trailing her multi-coloured skirts, twirling her white, crimson-nailed hands, one feels that half the effect would be lost in black-and-white. And yet I do not think that the colour adds to the perfect screen beauty of Miss Dietrich ; that alabaster countenance seems sometimes to be cheapened by its pinkish tints.

—Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

"This is the land of fire," says the local Catholic priest, "and you are a woman of fire." Nobody talks less apocalyptically than that: the great abstractions come whistling hoarsely out in Miss Dietrich's stylised, weary, and monotonous whisper, among the hideous technicolour flowers, the yellow cratered desert like Gruyére cheese, the beige faces. Startling sunsets bloom behind silhouetted camels very much as in the gaudy little pictures which used to be on sale on the pavements of Trafalgar Square. Alas! my poor Church, so picturesque, so noble, so superhumanly pious, so intensely dramatic. I really prefer the *New Statesman* view, shabby priests counting pesetas on their fingers in dingy cafés before blessing tanks.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

WINDBAG THE SAILOR. (William Beaudine—Gainsborough.)
Will Hay, Moore Marriott, Graham Moffat.

Will Hay takes his precarious pince-nez to sea, and the result is a rollicking parody of all sea sagas from the Bounty to the Girl Pat. As Captain Ben Cutlet, bar-corner salt with a somewhat inadequate canal-barge experience, Will Hay has got himself a grand new character. He sails the seas on imagination and old ale until the local gentry hear of his exploits. A lecture to the Sea Scouts leads to the command of a vessel, and then we're off—with part of the pier following. There is a mutiny in the best Bligh manner, adventures on a cannibal island, a neat piece of salvage, and a triumphant return, laced with good, hearty laughs and, for a welcome change, bright dialogue. What's more, there isn't a woman in it. —Guy Morgan, *The Daily Express*

The melancholy fact about many British comedies is that one leaves them with hope deferred. Will Hay has some excellent screen appearances to his credit. But will he ever, this side of Hollywood, get a film adequate to his most personal style, in which he will feel inspired with the spontaneity which is the life of comedy? *Windbag the Sailor* doesn't come within a thousand miles of inspiring him. It very nearly missed making me laugh . . . but one laugh in an hour is good hunting, I suppose, if you put it against the background of these arid days. How great is the need for a new universal figure of comedy on the screen!

—*The Birmingham Mail*

THE COUNTRY COUSIN. (Walt Disney.)

Though Mr. Disney shows no sign of returning to his earlier and more lyrical manner, *Country Cousin* is extremely funny, and recounts the adventures of a country mouse who is entertained so lavishly by his sophisticated town friends that he soon becomes inebriated and gratuitously insults a sleeping cat by treating him as though he were a football. Mr. Disney's wealth and ingenuity of detail is always there to redeem even the most commonplace of his inventions, and *Country Cousin*, while rich in detail and fertile in invention, breaks no fresh ground.

—*The Times*

SABOTAGE. (Alfred Hitchcock—Gaumont-British.)
Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, John Loder, Desmond Tester.

Alfred Hitchcock has his faults, but amongst his many admirable qualities is this: he has style. Ninety-nine pictures out of a hundred might have been made by anybody. But not Hitchcock's. His work is as unmistakable as Alexander Korda's, or Lubitsch's or René Clair's. His range, in atmosphere and characterisation and theme, is not very wide, but in his own field he is supreme. His setting is London, his characters are the Cockneys he has studied with such a shrewd and penetrating eye, his theme is the capacity for deeds of darkness and of horror that lie beneath the commonplace London life. Hitchcock's gift of the macabre gives point and distinction to his latest (and in many ways best) picture, *Sabotage*. Its very excellence and integrity may go against it at the box-office. The story is grim, the main situation—where a boy is asked to deliver an infernal machine at an underground station, is delayed en route and blown to smithereens with the rest of the passengers on the bus—is carried through to its logical, horrifying end. This, though the climax, is only one of a dozen situations charged with menace and smiling horror.

—George Campbell, *The Bystander*

Sabotage is the cleverest picture Alfred Hitchcock has made since the arrival of talkies. It is also, to me, the least likeable of them all. It is a cold, calculated, and quite masterly piece of film technics, designed to raise suspense and horror to the highest frequency. I am prepared to give it every honour in the academy so long as I am never asked to sit through it again. This is, I grant you, a brilliant piece of horrification. The scene with the boy in the bus is superbly timed. But I believe—and I stick to it—that there is a code in this sort of free-handed slaughter, and Hitchcock has gone outside the code in *Sabotage*. As a detective fan and an inveterate reader of thrillers I suggest that this is the sort of thing that should get a fellow blackballed from the Crime Club. Discreet directors don't kill schoolboys and dogs in omnibuses. Believe me, it isn't done.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

"The Garden of Allah"

LAND WITHOUT MUSIC. (Walter Forde—Capitol.)

Richard Tauber, Diana Napier, Schnozzle Durante.

The new musical fantasy, *Land Without Music*, contradicts its title most heartily and pleasantly withal, for the picture fairly hums with melody, as behoves a Tauber vehicle. It finds its subject in an old legend and its settings in the little Italian Duchy of Lucco, whose inhabitants are all of them music-mad. The sheep stray into the cornfields, the horses go unshod whilst the blacksmith mends bugles, and the Minister of Finance tootles on a flute, regardless of a heavy debt to Austria and a non-existent revenue. The Prince Regent meets the situation by banning all music from the State, and it is Richard Tauber's task to stir the people with his golden voice to a bloodless and melodious revolution. It is, indeed, a rejuvenated Tauber who restores harmony to Lucco, soothes the savage breasts of brigands, and finally wins the favour of a very gracious Princess in the person of Diana Napier.

—Michael Orme, *The Sketch*

Continental Films

ZÉRO DE CONDUITE. (NOUGHT FOR CONDUCT.) (Jean Vigo—Independent.)

Any film which asks that the critic shall not leave his brains at the box-office is likely to get an identical response from the high-brow gossip peddler and the low-brow variety. So it was not surprising that the *Observer* and the *Evening Standard* concealed their confusion at this film with exactly the same wisecrack ("Nought for behaviour, nought for direction . . ."). No less maudlin is the atmosphere in which Vigo's work is being shown at Hampstead, making a play for the naughty surrealist element and the *bourgeois enragé* at the same time. Criticism in this kind of weather becomes increasingly difficult.

First of all let it be said that the controversy over surrealism hardly enters into a discussion of *Zéro de Conduite*. There are few primarily surrealist passages, and those that exist are more akin to the dynamic symbolism of René Magritte than to any work of the more introspective surrealists (Eluard, Dali) to which certain critics have compared this film. There is no integration of the subconscious scene but an outspoken realism that is immeasurably more true than the routine adult conception of children and children's attitude to adults. Nor is *Zéro de Conduite* primarily satirical, as everyone appears to believe. It cries out with all the bitterness of the artist's heart at insincerity, evil and warped thinking. The impact of the cesspool mind of one of the "teachers" at the boarding-school where the story takes place is expressed by a sensitive child's shriek: "Le professeur est merde." And filthy he is, and the type of mind Vigo's argument is directed against.

Jean Vigo was born in prison, where his father was forced to commit suicide. Prejudice and bigotry drove this brilliant creative mind to its death at the age of twenty-nine. Surely now he is gone we can pay him the compliment of bringing to our appreciation of his film a little of the fair reception accorded to anything made amid vast technical resources at Denham? The Paris press show ended in a free fight. In London we merely sneer. If only you give the director a fair chance you will leave the Everyman as I did, boiling with hatred at all kinds of injustice, but mainly at the arty audience which mistakes a sincere and heroic treatment for fashionable comic satire.

—Roderic Papineau

FEAR. (V. Tourjansky—French.)
Charles Vanel, Gaby Morlay, Suzy Prim.

Fear is an odd matrimonial drama about an elderly Paris lawyer, who hires an actress to blackmail his young wife into admitting that she spent her holidays on the Riviera with a pug-faced pianist. His object in this strange escapade is not, apparently, legal redress, but the achievement of domestic purgation through pity and terror. Charles Vanel plays this tiresome old man, who even indites a lecture over his child's burnt rocking-horse, with all the evidences of grief and sincerity.

The film is from a story of Stefan Zweig's, and I suggest that a good working title would be *Fear: or Blackmailed into Bliss.*

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

"Confetti" with Hans Moser

CONFETTI. (Hubert Marischka—Austrian.)
Hans Moser, Leo Slezak, Friedl Czepa.

Confetti, after a bad opening, is not quite so devastatingly cheery as most Austrian films. It is true there are a good many balloons and paper streamers at the Carnival Ball (when will producers realise there is no more dismal sight for the outsider than that of others riotously and incomprehensibly enjoying themselves?) but the course of events which follow the presence there of a priggish and miserly professor, the proprietor of a big store who should have been elsewhere on business, and a girl from the dress department who has borrowed an exclusive model, becomes quite agreeably entangled. No film with Hans Moser and Leo Slezak could fail to have human as well as humorous moments.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

THE CIRCUS. (Alexandrov—Mosfilm.)
See also W.F.N., JULY.

The Circus, Russia's newest film to be released in Europe and now showing in Paris, is on the face of it a miserable imitation of the kind of story film turned out in its dozens by almost every studio in the world.

The usual components are faithfully present. The boy, the girl, comic relief, trick artists, mobile scenery, fanfares of trumpets and "Les Girls" half-way to nudity. But the flavour is reminiscent of the films of 1910. The Boy, a true-blue Harold, is in love with The Girl, an American circus star, hounded from her own country and pathetically bewildered by The Villain, a German, cum moustachios, top hat and cloak, who has her morally in his clutches. The grand spectacles made possible by several circus performances, and the singing and dancing of the heroine, were so forcedly gay because so completely imitative, that the effect was only embarrassing.

But the strength and purpose of this film lay in the complete sincerity of the last 150 feet. It was then that the heroine's secret, her coloured baby, was revengefully disclosed by the villain during a circus show. Holding up the child triumphantly in his arms he waited for scorn and abuse. It did not come. Instead the little boy was taken from him and passed lovingly from group to group. So well directed was this scene that the child's gradual change from fear and subjection to confidence and freedom said more for racial equality than might months of oratorical propaganda.

Here is a story film, in many respects weak and immature, which is not content to offer simply escapist entertainment. Not to show how 5 per cent of the world live, but how 100 per cent of the world should live according to the Soviet ideal. And it was because a bourgeois French audience were encouraged to consider the possible betterment of future generations that they sat at the edge of their seats to applaud this film through the final fade-out.

—Louise Watt

LA TENDRE ENNEMIE. (Max Ophüls—Dutch.)

Max Ophüls handles his material with great skill. The ghosts' transparent figures, able to pass through walls or perch in chandeliers, become somewhat tedious, but the unfolding of the woman's life is full of delicacy and none the less moving for being satirical as well as sentimental. The film holds the attention and occasionally touches the emotions. But it is fundamentally a picture whose main function is to show how even a familiar and rather feeble story can be revivified by sophisticated direction.

—R. H., *Manchester Guardian*

THE MONEY MAKERS OF 1936

Vote among American and British Exhibitors gives best box-office stars.

Motion-Picture Herald poll shows Shirley Temple top for second season.

Shirley Temple—Tops!

American Exhibitors Choose—

Shirley Temple	First
Clark Gable	Second
Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers*	Third
Robert Taylor	Fourth
Joe E. Brown	Fifth
Dick Powell	Sixth
Joan Crawford	Seventh
Claudette Colbert	Eighth
Jeanette MacDonald	Ninth
Gary Cooper	Tenth

Sixth!

Jessie Matthews

Joan Crowford—Seventh
this year: fifth in 1935

British Exhibitors Choose—

Shirley Temple	First
Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers*	Second
Gracie Fields	Third
Clark Gable	Fourth
Laurel and Hardy	Fifth
Jessie Matthews	Sixth
James Cagney	Seventh
Wallace Beery	Eighth
Greta Garbo	Ninth
Norma Shearer	Tenth

* Exhibitors listing Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers divided in reporting them as a team and as individuals, the majority, however, as a team.

George O'Brien—Western Star No. 2
Buck Jones topped both U.S.A. and British Exhibitors' lists. On the British list George O'Brien is fourth, with Ken Maynard and Tim McCoy second and third.

Gary Cooper—Tenth
in the 1936, he rises from thirty-first place in the 1935 poll

British Exhibitors' vote on British Stars box-office appeal places Gracie Fields first, Jessie Matthews third, Jack Hulbert fourth, George Formby fifth, Robert Donat sixth.

Eighth in British List
Wallace Beery does not appear in America's first ten.

America's Fourth
Robert Taylor was placed eighty-third in 1935

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"I have only twice been to a cinema since 1920."—*The Archbishop of York.*

"As a rule, the cinema leaves me hearty and heart-free."—*C. A. Lejeune.*

"I've just done a script on the Coronation—a comedy of course."

Harry Langdon

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE TEST

(*Write on both sides of the paper only*).

1. Distinguish between *Shirley Temple Macpherson* and *Father Durante.*
2. On what noted occasions were the following songs written?—
   "I know a Lasky, a Bonnie, Bonnie Lasky."
   "Auprès de ma Fonda."
   "The Last Rotha of Summer."
   "Seated one Day at the Wurlitzer" (or "The Lost Korda").
   "Arliss, Where art Thou?"
   "The Wastrel Boy" (or "I know a Bank").
   "Hullabaloo, bela, Will Hay."
   "Schach, and Let's be Friends."
   "Where G.B. sucks, there suck I."
3. Have you ever been to a cinema?
4. Which (if any) of these famous film names make your heart thump—thump?—Garbo, Stanley Baldwin, G. A. Atkinson, Donald Duck, The March of Time, Denham.
5. "Kiss me Hardy"—Under what circumstances did Laurel make this remark?
6. Which would you rather do, take Mr. St. John Ervine to a movie, or stay at home and read Miss C. A. Lejeune? Or vice-versa?
7. What about Mae West?
8. Say quite simply and frankly (but if possible printably) what you think about the interior decorations of the average super-cinema.
9. If you have answered all the questions correctly, you are entitled to a conducted tour of the City by a well-known producer. If not, think yourself lucky.

JOLLY GOOD FUN, WHAT?

(*Extracts from Newsreel reviews in "Ta-Day's Cinema," January 15th.*)

"Prominent here are pictures of the manufacture of gas masks at Blackburn."

"Gas mask factory at Blackburn."

"Again gas mask manufacture occupies a prominent place."

"Further good pictures of the gas mask manufacture."

"The opening of the gas mask factory at Blackburn."

Anyhow, if there isn't a war, the Studios can buy them up

A CYNIC TO HIS SON

You've got to be born in the business, my boy,
You've got to be one of the mob;
You must have relations
In high situations
To hold down a Studio job.
So just put away your diplomas,
Your brilliance is not worth a bob—
Unless your Aunt Jess is
In charge of the dresses
You won't get a Studio job—
There, there,
You won't get a Studio job.

You've got to be born in the business, my boy,
You won't serve a Studio term
Unless you're connected
With one who's directed
A number of flops for the firm.
You might make a Marion Crawford,
A Capra or Flaherty (Bob)
But unless you are born in
The game, you won't horn in—
You won't get a Studio job,
Don't cry,
You won't get a Studio job.

* * *

If Douglas Fairbanks Junior
Were anyone punior
He'd stay away from the fights
That are such a fragrant feature
of West End first nights.

* * *

DAVE ROBSON SAYS:—

A new problem confronted me recently when I was appointed technical adviser to the Eggshell-Mex Producers Association.

It was my business to increase egg production if possible to an average of three eggs per day from each hen.

An experience during the late war, when I noticed that hens and birds literally dropped their eggs at the sound of gun fire, led me to believe that sound waves in some form were responsible.

So I played everything from jazz to symphony into a rooster to obtain data, but without result.

After further research and study I resolved to write some music in a very low frequency range, some fowl music so foul that no fowl could resist the hip swing response to its beating rhythm.

In effect this noise toned up their vertical protuberant sinews' creating a semi-quaver movement in their harmonical gizzard with the nett result of three eggs per hen per eight-hour day.

By using ultra short waves I was able to obtain eggs boiled, poached, or fried, straight from the chicken, but it would require a combination of Bach's and Disney's symphonies plus a heavy bombardment to get them—scrambled!

Zero de Lejeune

One in the eye for Baldwin

"Alexander Korda, a producer whose name, in some curious way, has come in time to represent England."—*Z. D. Lejeune.*

AND

One in the eye for the Film Council

"The truth is that there is no production crisis in the industry."—*Z. D. Lejeune.*

AND

One in the eye for You and Me

"The film industry does not want money from the public . . . its finances are not our affair. We cannot understand them, and we have no business to interfere in them."

(*This programme comes to you by courtesy of the Happier Sunday League*).

W.F.N.'s aureole of birdseed is awarded this month to Lord Warwick for the following pronunciamento on Greta Garbo.

"She has been thirsty for knowledge, she has drunk deep, and the draught has transformed her."

* * *

FAERY STORY FOR THE TOTS

ON-CE UP-ON A TIME THE-RE WAS A GRE-AT BIG PRO-DUC-ER WHO WAS LENT A LOT OF MON-EY BY A GRE-AT BIG BANK TO MAKE A GREAT BIG FILM.

AND SO HE WENT IN-TO PRO-DUC-TION AND FIN-ISHED THE GRE-AT BIG FILM ON TIME AND THE GRE-AT BIG FILM WENT IN-TO THE CIN-E-MAS AND MADE A GRE-AT BIG PRO-FIT.

AND THEN THE GRE-AT BIG PRO-DUC-ER PAID BACK ALL THE MONEY HE HAD BOR-ROW-ED FROM THE GRE-AT BIG BANK, WITH INT-ER-EST.

AND THE GRE-AT BIG PRO-DUC-ER DID NOT ASK THE BANK FOR AN-Y MORE MON-EY.

AND WHEN LIT-TLE AUD-REY HEARD THIS STOR-Y SHE LAUGH-ED AND LAUGH-ED AND LAUGH-ED, BE-CAUSE HER UNC-LE HAD AL-READY TOLD HER A-BOUT THE MIL-LEN-I-UM.

LORUM

SNOOKS GREISER, W.F.N.'s cantankerous lift-boy, whisked several members of the Film Council down into the basement the other day.

Snooks: "I suppose you're patting each other's back about your analysis of British Film Finance, huh?"

Film Council (in chorus): "The council is an unbiased organisation formed to investigate and report on——"

Snooks: "So what? Maybe you'll turn your attention to the finances of W.F.N. next, huh?"

F.C. (in chorus): "The Council is an unbiased——"

Snooks: "——Or even the Film Council itself, huh? Third Floor, probes, quizzes, dirt, lowdown, inside stories and *World Film News*."

HOT NEWS

When the Hollywood Maestros want to concentrate—

Jean Harlow counts the cars that pass her home.
Thinks for the buggy ride.

* * *

Clarence Brown goes for long motor rides.
Round and round Miss Harlow's house please.

* * *

De Mille smokes a pipe.
It's called "Nero" and it's full of extras in togas.

* * *

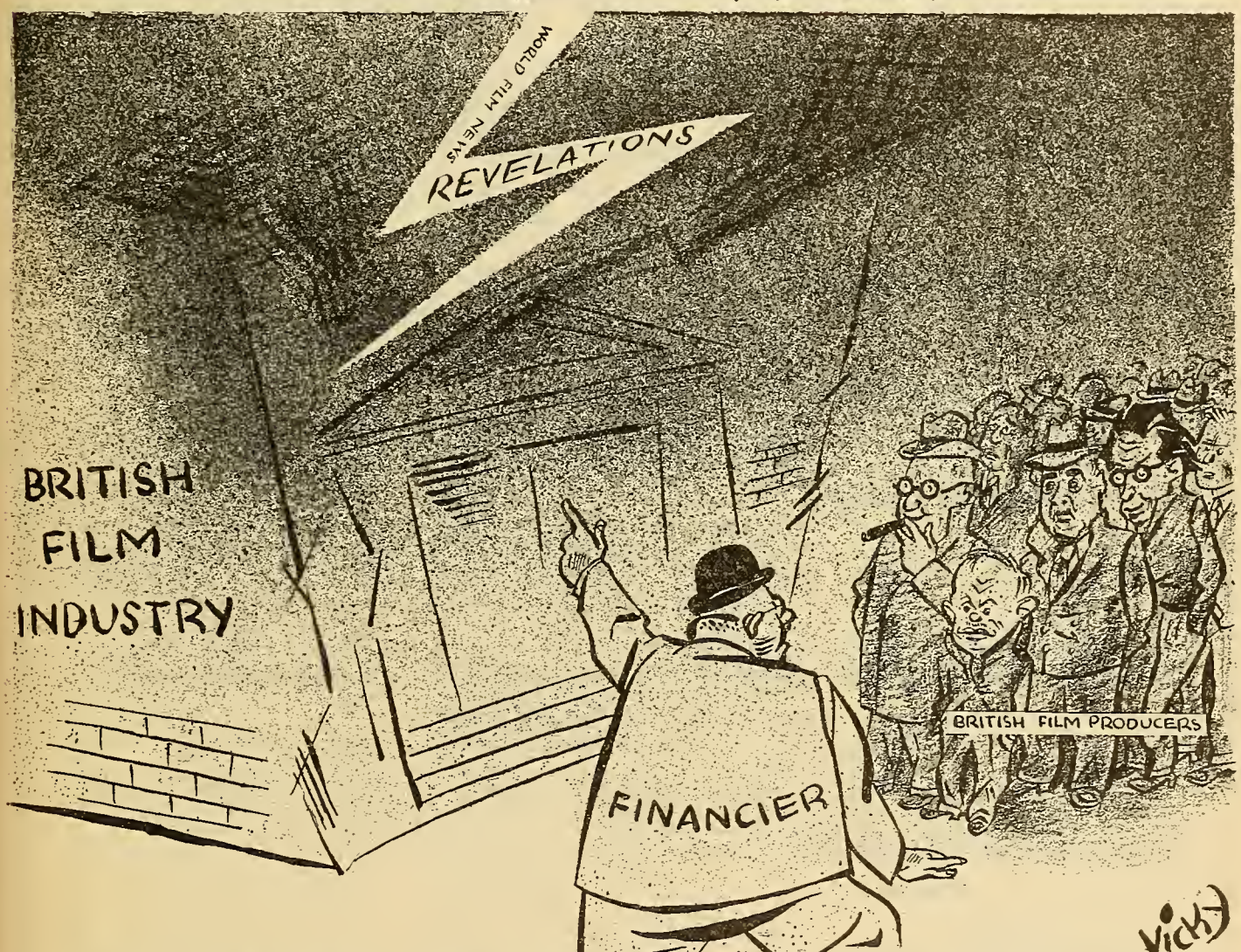
Clark Gable has a hot bath.
So what?

Surrealist Film Scenario, appropriately culled from the correspondence columns of the Times.

PUPPY PIE

Brigadier-General Wolley-Dod gives us one instance of a joke that the Eton boys had against the bargees in Victorian days. But there was a still older one in existence, for Stephen Terry, who was at Eton from 1787 to 1793, tells us that the bargees were on very good terms with the Eton boys generally, but did not like too often the old joke of stealing a donkey in the dark, taking it for a calf, finding that it had shoes on, and throwing it overboard. He adds that the bargemen used to join in this joke, when paid for (apparently in drinks), but not otherwise.

THUNDER IN THE CITY



"IS THIS THE BIG "HIT" WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR?"

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Brilliant Air Ministry Film on Flight–Theory

A technical training film of first importance has been sponsored by the Air Ministry and is taking an important part in the teaching of new recruits. The part so far made runs to five reels, each reel intended to accompany a lecture. At the end of the course, all five reels are run as a refresher. The length finally aimed at is fifteen reels.

The present film stands head and shoulders over other films of technical instruction. It is measured but not slow, clear but not too detailed, and makes use of all the technical possibilities of the modern cinema. Most remarkable are those sections using a technique developed by Doctor Townend, renowned aeronautical researchman. By his technique, movements of air are made visible. The principle is simple. Air at different temperatures has different optical densities. Rays of light passing through air of different optical densities are defracted to different degrees. The phenomenon is familiar to anyone who has looked at a landscape shimmering through the air rising off a hot road. By this process, one can actually see air flowing past a wing section as if it were a boat in water. The process is used to illustrate the elementary principles of flight, the effect of "slats," and what happens in a stall.

The film was prepared by B.T.H. Some of it was shot on the Western Electric highspeed camera at 2,400 pictures a second on 16mm.

The Air Ministry have forty-two sound 16mm. projectors in continuous use at their training centres. They contemplate buying further outfits, and must be one of the largest operators in this country.

Principles of Flying

WHY AEROPLANES FLY, by Arthur Elton and Robert Fairthorne (Longmans, Green, 2*s.* 6*d.*).

This is the first book of the new *March of Time* series, planned to give the public "a detached, simple, and untechnical explanation of the world we live in—its mechanics, its social organisation, its methods of Government."

Elton is already well-known for his lucid booklets on the Fluid Flywheel and Epicyclic Gear, and in this book he has collaborated with an aeronautical expert.

In the short space of 82 pages they present the history of man's attempt to fly, the principles of flight as we now know it, and a summing up of the present uses of the flying machine both for construction and destruction.

The book stands in the same relation to modern literature as the documentary film does to modern film production, and if this attempt at really simple explanation is to be regarded as experimental, it is also to be noted as a complete success.

Simple analogies to everyday themes, clearly-drawn diagrams and convincing photographs make it quite certain that no one can read the book and remain in ignorance of the principles behind the safe and comfortable passage of an airliner from Croydon to Austrialia.

Incidentally, all school teachers should insist on getting this book.

C. M.

Steuart Films **A diagram 'Set'**

Moving Lines

by Ronald Steuart

It is surprising how few people realise that a cartoon camera can be used for anything but the making of entertainment films. To a great number, the diagram film is unheard of, yet this type of picture is an excellent method of teaching.

As a teaching film, the diagram cartoon is not confined to schools, but has a wider application in Industry, though at present, little has been done in this field.

It is, for instance, an excellent way of illustrating the efficiency of an organisation run under scientific management, by showing with the aid of moving diagrams, the co-relation of operations and departmental routine, resulting in the rhythmic balance of production and output relative to sales creation.

Again, a moving diagram can show far more clearly than any book, the working of various machines, since it can portray slowly, very rapid movements, or show one movement disassociated from the remainder.

There are certain fundamentals which must be followed.

First, it must be remembered that the film is for the student, and not for the teacher.

The treatment of each stage must therefore be slow, and to the point; each section must be treated fully, and presented to the student, so that he does not have to think what is meant, but see it immediately.

While a certain point is being shown, there must be nothing on the screen to detract the attention. Clever tricks and photographic gymnastics are out of place in a teaching film, especially in a diagram cartoon. A very grave and often a too common fault is having too many moving lines on the screen at once. While, to the expert, all is so easy, to the unitiated the effect is confusing.

Secondly, the film should not contain too much subject-matter; rather split it into two or even three parts. I have seen a ten-minutes film embrace what was for me nearly a whole term's work, and although I knew a certain amount on the subject, it took me all my time to follow it thoroughly. How glad I am that I was not being introduced to the subject!

News Review

Experiments in the making of films for Africans which have been carried out in E. Africa by the Social and Industrial Research Department of the International Missionary Council, have so much impressed the Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda Governments that they have contributed £1,000 for the supply of a series of films for their own use and for the provision of cinema units for displaying them.

Mr. G. C. Latham, one of the Directors of the Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment, says : "The series we shall now make specially for the East African Governments will be instructional films dealing with such subjects as cotton growing, seed selection, the curing of hides and skins, the improvement of village water supplies, the grading of agricultural produce, anti tse-tse fly measures and so on. The actors in all our films are Africans, and Africans have been trained to do some of the technical work, of shooting, production and exhibition too."

The Colonial Development Fund has made a grant of £1,500 for the continuance of the Experiment, while the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which originally made the Experiment possible, has granted a further £1,000.

* * *

That continental governments are fast realising the power of films as a means of propaganda, was pointed out by Curl Belling, chief of Nazi Film propaganda, in a recent review. In the majority of the continental countries independent film production has completely vanished, and has given way to State-controlled or State-subsidised companies, producing films to "serve the interests of the State," and to include incidents, personalities, or ideas which the respective governments consider desirable for moulding public opinion.

Italy exercises stringent control over film production, and in Poland it is censored and controlled by the Film Chamber. In both Germany and France independent producers do exist, but a strong censorship is applied to prevent tendencies not in line with the government's policy.

* * *

At a recent meeting of the Kine Section of the Royal Photographic Society a programme of sub-standard sound films was followed by a talk by Mr. H. R. Parsons, of Winads, on trailer production, and included a description of the Multi-scene process, by which the illusion of a line of dancers is produced by a multiplicity of reflections of a single girl.

On February 22nd, a selection of films accepted in the recent Sub-standard Film Competition will be shown. This will be followed by a demonstration of the R.C.A. ultra-violet recording system. On March 18th, H. Chevalier, of the Denham studios, will give a paper on trick work and special effects.

Admission of non-members to R.P.S. meetings is by invitation of a member, or by ticket obtainable from the Secretary, 35 Russell Square, W.C.1.

The Kine Section of the Society caters for amateurs as well as professionals.

PUB. & PROP. PRODS. PACK PALACE

That's how America's *Variety* would say it. In plain English it means that a programme of Publicity and Propaganda Films packed the roomy Palace Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue on Thursday, January 14th. In fact there were so many applications for seats that a repeat performance was given a fortnight later, again to a packed house. The audience consisted of advertisers and advertising agency men. We show our films to the trade with just as much confidence as we show them to the public. We know that they are as good as any advertising films being produced to-day.

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Proposed—A Central Recording Outfit For Amateur Clubs

Mr. Grierson's offer in January *World Film News* to secure the expert advice of professional directors at the free disposal of amateurs making films of civic interest is perhaps the most important event that has yet happened in the amateur world.

But if amateurs are to play as significant a part as he suggests in reporting aspects of community life and in winning a place for their films in public programmes, something more is needed—and that is Sound.

The limitations of silent film are greater now than they were in 1929, because you have deliberately to construct your scenario to avoid making your audience conscious of the lack of that sound to which it is nowadays accustomed. Titles look archaic; their avoidance imposes a narrative method that appears uneconomical and clumsy to modern eyes. The amateur is tempted, therefore, to consider his subject romantically rather than analytically and to be concerned more with the visual good looks of his shots than with their logical content. And this, though it may make for the most pleasing silent films, does not, Mr. Grierson would agree, make for the best documentary.

To bring the emphasis from form to content we must have sound. Few of us who are amateurs can afford it. In my own unit we divert ourselves considerably with amplifying apparatus that includes two gramophone turn-tables, a mixing unit, and a mike, which enables us to project a sound accompaniment of sorts when we screen our own films. But if we are to make films that are of use to civic or commercial concerns, and that can be shown universally, then we need to have the sound "fixed"—on film or disc—for all time.

Can Mr. Grierson put at the disposal of amateurs a central recording plant for the post-synchronisation of their work? Can he tell amateurs the cost of operating such a plant if it became available? For, if the running-costs were not prohibitive, there must be scores and scores of amateur units like my own that would gladly put down £5 or £10 towards the initial outlay.

ERNEST DYER.

Mr. Grierson asks: "How many amateur units will—like Mr. Dyer's—put down £10 for this purpose?"

"Way to the Sea"

A further experiment in documentary

"The Way to the Sea"

by J. B. Holmes

The Way to the Sea (Strand Films).

Production: Paul Rotha. Direction: J. B. Holmes.

This is Holmes' first big film under the Strand Film banner. It proves him a director of great technical ability, considerable resource and a good sense of effect. In *The Way to the Sea* there is, however, a certain lack of the real appreciation of human beings, which the documentary film above all others demands.

As a whole the film suffers from not knowing where it is going. It begins impressively with a historical sequence about Portsmouth, the Navy, and the road from London. It continues analytically with the process of the electrification of the London to Portsmouth railway line. It ends imaginatively with a road to the sea, a description of holidaying at the Isle of Wight and finally Navy Week. Each of these sequences is intrinsically good.

But the final impression the film leaves—even after a second viewing—is one of indecision; it impresses only in bits. It makes a series of statements which do not finally combine into a coherent whole.

The trouble probably began when Rotha and Holmes were scripting and were faced with the problem—was the film to be about advantages of electricity, the joys of summer holidays, or the story of Portsmouth and Britain's sea power?—or how could these elements be attached to a really solid skeleton? I do not think they found the answer.

The Way to the Sea has so many first-class qualities that it is necessary to apply to it a really high standard of criticism. Taking it piece-meal, it is full of good things. Particularly excellent is the sequence of the journey to the sea and holiday makers, in which Holmes' sensitive direction combines strongly with Auden's apt and moving images and an effectively economic score by Britten. All through the film both the camera work and cutting are extremely good. Because of the problems it raises (even if it has not solved them all) it merits the close attention of everybody interested in the Realist Film. B. W.

BOOK REVIEW

"Only Yesterday." A Play in Three Acts by Adrian Brunel (George Newnes).

Adrian Brunel, who has a long tradition of service in the movie business, has adapted the successful silent film **Blighty** into play form. He ends his preface with the words ". . . it is my documentary of the home front." It is a documentary, but of limited class. The war fought on the home front in this play is fought in the houses of the upper middle class.

Mr. Brunel has ably expressed the vague liberal spirit of pre-war days, with a tinge of Edwardian stuffiness. The play moves quickly and shows the influence of the movie mind on the theatre, though in idea and propaganda value it is weak. It should do well in Shaftesbury Avenue. D. F. T.

Ancient History of the Cinema

Many comments and much additional information have reached us from reliable sources on our January article "How the Movies Began to Move," by Marie Seton. Several of the writers emphasise the need for an authenticated history of the film. On this Robb Lawson writes:

"Will Day was completing his authoritative history of Kinematography, '25,000 Years to Trap a Shadow,' when death intervened. Cannot some representative body take up the duty of its publication? That would put an end to loosely written history. Even the 'Snob's Bible,' the Enclyclopædia Britannica, had to go to America to find the Film History expert, and naturally, he was not aware that England had any Film History. Day's book explored the world-aspect, and it took him 30 years to authenticate and secure actual documentary proofs for all statements made."

On various points touched on in our article Mr. Lawson comments:

THAUMATROPE.

Will Day credited its invention to Sir John Herschel, *circa* 1824, after Herschel had heard Dr. Roget lecture at the Royal Society on "Explanation of an Optical Deception." The Thaumatrope was put on the market by the vendor, John Ayrton, Paris, in 1826.

DAEDALEUM.

Dr. Horner's "Daedaleum" or "Wheel of the Devil" is mentioned in *The Philosophical Magazine* in 1834, four years prior to Miss Seton's date. It was re-invented in France in 1860 and called "The Wheel of Life." Dr. Horner came from Bristol, not from America.

INVENTOR OF CELLULOID.

Will Hay always contended that Alexander Parkes of Birmingham had invented celluloid in 1854, and that it was first clarified, for use in a hand-camera, in place of hand-plates, by Hyatt, New Jersey, in 1869; followed by J. Carbutt of Philadelphia in 1884.

In the year 1887, Rev. Hannibal Goodwin, an American clergyman, patented a process for clarified film in ribbon form.

For years Goodwin's relatives fought Eastman on the question of infringement of their 1887 Celluloid Patent. I believe some financial arrangement, as between the parties, settled the matter. What it was—the public have never known.

Your article reads—"At last on 22nd March 1896, a short film invented by August and Louis Lumière was shown in Paris."

As a matter of fact, Lumière procured his first patent on 13th February 1895, demonstrated his "Cinematographe" (by screening his films) before a private assembly at Lyons on March 22nd, 1895, and subsequently presented to the public, in the basement of the Grand Café on the Paris Boulevards, in December 1895.

Lumière made no claim to be the originator of Kinematography. In conversation, he revealed the fact that his first idea of its possibilities came to him after having seen Edison's Kinetoscope in Paris.

"Victory came to me when I was able in December 1894, to photograph a moving picture of 17 metres long, showing the workers leaving my father's factory at Lyons. I had yet to devise the method by which I could project my secret on the screen. That was accomplished on 22nd March, 1895."

We have been unable to publish, this month, all the information about the ancient history of films that has reached us, as a result of Marie Seton's article in January: "How the Movies began to Move."

Further information will be published in the February issue.

Basil Wright

(late Senior Director of the E.M.B. & G.P.O. Film Units)

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RADIO NOTES:

B.B.C. and conflict of Commercial concerns; steering a course in national interest; John Hilton and the hire-purchase scandal; the Coleridge Biography; new Talks Director.

by *GEORGE AUDIT.*

EVER SINCE THE B.B.C.'s remarkable birth from the pockets of six big radio manufacturers it has been hard up against the problem of conflicting commercial interests. Anybody could see that this new enterprise with a monopoly and Government patronage was bound to conflict with the Press, and with the musical, film, acting, music-hall and publishing professions. Generally the B.B.C. won. Before the broadcasting licence was granted by the Post Office, an assurance had to be given to the Press that during the original period of the licence, the first news bulletin would not be read before 7 p.m. The first licence did not permit running commentaries on public ceremonies or on any event that was considered "hot" news.

* * *

By 1924 Reith admitted: "The Press have met us on certain matters and we have endeavoured to meet them." The artistic professions soon had to knuckle under.

* * *

The Royal Charter commanded that Reith and the Governors should steer a course "in the national interest." Bankers, the Cabinet, armament manufacturers, and the directors of every kind of ramp all expected Reith to interpret this their way. So far he has pleased most of them. He has occasional lapses.

* * *

Advertisements for drinks are consistently refused by B.B.C. papers, although the *Radio Times* is frequently packed with "quack" advertisements.

★ ★ ★

John Hilton, who is speaking again on February 11, has apparently been sailing near the wind. Last month he uncovered the workings of the less reputable hire-purchase firms, correspondence schools and publishers. There were immediate reductions in the sales of certain well-known firms. Representations were made to the B.B.C. Henceforward Hilton's manuscripts must be submitted a little longer in advance.

★ ★ ★

The most interesting piece of sound production last month was E. A. Harding's biography of *Caleridge*. It tried to present a picture of Coleridge through a series of dialogues in which the poet, in his own words, answered the apologies and criticisms of his contemporaries. The resulting drama was a tussle between the subjective and the impersonal points of view. You were constantly divided between sympathy for Coleridge the man, with his aspirations and misfortunes, and the judgments of men like Wordsworth and De Quincey.

* * *

The whole was set against a sustained background of Sibelius' music. There were extracts from all the symphonies. They were well chosen. What is this strange affinity between Coleridge and Sibelius? Thirty-five minutes of their words and music synchronised perfectly.

* * *

There were faults, notably, an involved opening and a poor performance of Coleridge by Farquharson. Otherwise, a very good show.

★ ★ ★

When the B.B.C. were advertising for a new Talks Director, *World Film News* commented on the national importance of this post and on the necessity of a wise choice. From hundreds of applications Sir Richard Maconachie was selected.

"Maconachie, Sir Richard (Roy), K.B.E., C.I.E. 1926, I.C.S. Educ. Tonbridge School, University College, Oxford, B.A. 1907; entered Indian Civil Service 1909; Foreign and Political Dept. 1914; military service 1917–19; Counsellor, Kabul 1922–24; British Minister to Afghanistan 1930–35. Club, E. India United Services."

That is what *Who's Who* says of him. The subject of this remarkable career is no doubt worthy enough in many respects, but is he likely to know precisely what his be-millioned audience with its problems and its fancies, is needing to know?

* * *

If the answer to that question lies in the new Spring Talks programme it is disappointing. A series on shopping, another on Church and Community, and another on Shakespeare may satisfy a few but I am willing to wager that Radio Luxembourg will prove more popular.

B.B.C. Events

Monday, Feb. 1st, 1.0 p.m.: Fourth Test Match (from Adelaide). NATIONAL.

★Wednesday, Feb. 3rd, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert (Beecham). W. Gieseking, piano. NATIONAL. 8.40 p.m.: ★*Braadway* (early gangster play) produced Gielgud. REGIONAL.

Thursday, Feb. 4th, 7.30 p.m.: Hallé Concert (Barbirolli). REGIONAL.

Friday, Feb. 5th, 8.15 p.m.: B.B.C. Midland Orchestra. *The Blessed Damozel* (Debussy). REGIONAL.

Saturday, Feb. 6th, 2.50 p.m.: Wales *v.* Scotland (Rugger). NATIONAL.

Sunday, Feb. 7th, 10.5 p.m.: *Lepanto* (Chesterton). Prod. Gielgud. NATIONAL. 6.30 p.m.: Sunday Orchestral Concert No. 14 (Boult). REGIONAL.

Monday, Feb. 8th, 8.0 p.m.: *Its Happening Now.* NATIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra, Jelly D'Aranyi and Adila Fachiri. REGIONAL. 8.30 p.m.: *Wait For Me* (Wade). Prod. Burnham. REGIONAL.

Tuesday, Feb. 9th, 9.20 p.m.: Church, Community and State, Lord Lothian. NATIONAL. 8.15 p.m.: Modern Poetry, No. 1. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Feb. 10th, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert. (Wood). Arthur Rubenstein (piano). NATIONAL.

Thursday, Feb. 11th, 6.20 p.m.: *This Way Out.* John Hilton. NATIONAL. ★8.15 p.m.: Royal Philharmonic concert (Sargeot). *Balshazzar's Feast.* (Walton). REGIONAL.

Friday, Feb. 12th, 8.0 p.m.: The White Coons. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Feb. 13th, 2.35 p.m.: England *v.* Ireland (Rugger). Capt. Wakelam. NATIONAL. 7.45 p.m. *Boris Godounov.* Sadler's Wells. REGIONAL.

★Sunday, Feb. 14th, 5.35 p.m.: *All For Love.* (Dryden). Production: Creswell. NATIONAL.

★Tuesday, Feb. 16th, 9.20 p.m.: Church, Community and State. T. S. Eliot. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Feb. 17th, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert. (Szigeti, Boult). NATIONAL.

Thursday, Feb. 18th, 9.45 p.m.: Talk by Edward Clark on the Contemporary Music Concert. NATIONAL. 8.15 p.m.: *The Nightingale* (Anderson). Production: Gielgud. REGIONAL.

Friday, Feb. 19th, 9.40 p.m.: Contemporary Music Concert (Ansermet). NATIONAL. 9.0 p.m. Feature programme: *Blue Danube.* Production: Gielgud. REGIONAL.

Sunday, Feb. 21st, 9.30 p.m.: *Henry Brocken* (de la Mere). Production: Burnham. NATIONAL 5.0 p.m. Feature programme, *Stede Bonnet.* REGIONAL.

Tuesday, Feb. 23rd, 8.0 p.m.: Feature Programme, *Steel.* REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Feb. 24th, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert. (Ansermet). NATIONAL.

Thursday, Feb. 25th, 8.40 p.m.: Shakespeare. Granville Barker. NATIONAL.

Friday, Feb. 26th, 1.0 p.m.: Fifth Test Match (from Melbourne). NATIONAL. 8.45 p.m.: Opera from Budapest. *Szekeley Fono.* (Kodaly). REGIONAL.

Saturday, Feb. 27th, 2.50 p.m.: Ireland *v.* Scotland (Rugger) from Dublin. NATIONAL.

★Sunday, Feb. 28th, 5.35 p.m.: *Anthony and Cleopatra* (Shakespeare). Production: Gielgud. NATIONAL.

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With this issue of the World Film News we celebrate our fourth birthday.

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CONTINENTAL NEWS

FRANCE

From a long list of pictures now in production in France prominence should be given to the new Pabst opus, *Mademoiselle Docteur*, the cast of which includes Pierre Blanchard, Dita Parlo and Pierre Fresnay. A Maxim Gorki story is being filmed by Jean Renoir, *Les Bas-Fonds*, and *Nitchevo* is being made by Jacques de Baroncelli with Harry Baur, Ivan Mosjoukine and Marcelle Cyantal. Maurice Chevalier is also engaged on a new production which Maurice Tourneur is directing, to be called *Avec le Saurire*. Henri Bernstein, the celebrated dramatist who wrote the play on which Bergner's *Träumende Mund* was based, has another of his plays in production, *L'Assaut*.

* * *

L'Appel du Silence, directed by Léon Poirier, has been awarded La Grande Prix du Cinema, the famous prize presented by La Société d'Encouragement à l'Art et à l'Industrie, for the best French film of 1936. This film—the history of Charles de Foucauld, a French officer who turned missionary and later died as a victim of the great war—scored over Benoit-Levy's *Héléne* and Abel Gance's *Un Grand Amour de Beethoven* by its strong national theme, and not by its technical merit. This same award was made to Feyder's *La Kermesse Héroïque* in 1935.

* * *

In opposition to the kind of award described above, the Prix Louis Delluc has been created by a group called "Jeune Critique Indépendante." This prize is warded for unorthodox and radical productions. Among the judges are Mercel Achard, Claude Aveline, Pierre Bost, Georges Charensol, Benjamin Fainsilbe and Jean Vidal. This year's award goes to Jean Renoir's *Les Bas-Fonds*.

* * *

Erich von Stroheim, the German actor-director, who is now playing in the French spy drama *Marthe Richard, Espionne de France*, has been invited by General Franco to fly over the Spanish lines to film the fighting. It is reported that he may accept after his present engagement is finished. He has just completed for M.G.M. a scenario for a film entitled *General Hospital*, in which he has aimed at showing "a new and wholly different sex—the sex of hospital nurses, whose contacts with men have no social or conventional limits." Among the films he has in mind is one from his own story of a somnambulist girl and her drunkard father. He also has ideas for a war film "which no country would allow to be shot"—indicating how women are responsible for war since the warrior is their hero and the men have to parade in uniforms to win their love.

BELGIUM

(By our Brussels Correspondent)

Belgium is now awaiting the recommendations of a Committee set up by the Government to enquire into the means of fostering a National Screen Industry.

It is already alleged that during the sessions of the committee a good deal of racketeering went on. A combine of French and Belgian interests tried to force through a plan for a large central studio. The influences behind this plan were by no means National and a Press campaign against it caused, it is believed, a heavy rewrite of much of the Report.

Meantime it seems probable that the Committee will recommend State Credits to approved production companies and a Quota system similar to our own.

Projects are already in hand for a £40,000 studio, and the sponsors are only waiting for publication of the Report to go ahead.

* * *

Henri Storck has completed three shorts on aspects of Belgian life, for showing at the Paris Exhibition this year.

Dekeukelaire is engaged on a Belgian feature picture, *Le Mauvais Oeil*, based on a story by Hermann Terlinck. He is using Flemish peasants as actors.

HUNGARY

Following the film *Hortobagy*, Hungary is now making an ambitious film in quite a different style to be called *Rendez-vous on the Danube*, which Stephen Szekely is directing.

GERMANY

A number of interesting films are at present in production in Germany. Emil Jannings is working on *Der Herrscher* (The Autocrat), and Magda Schneider is at the moment finishing *Frauenliebe, Frauenlied*. The new Gigli picture, *Der Sänger Ihrer Hoheit* is now in production with Geraldine Katt in a prominent part. Director Rudolf van der Noss and star Camilla Horn are making *Die Weisse Schwester*, the first German-Hungarian co-operative film. Much is expected in Germany of *Boll im Metropol*, a musical feature which Frank Wysbar is completing at the Neubabelsberg studios.

* * *

Pabst's interest in transferring opera to the screen has already been proclaimed by the *Drei Groschen Oper* and *Don Quixote*. He believes that there is a widespread demand for opera among Continental and particularly German audiences. He holds that the adaptation to movie of existing operas will lead to the writing of opera specially for the screen, and thus to a more general conception of sound-films in terms of music.

TOP HATS AND BALD HEADS

by R. H. KIEK

"The Ballad of the Top Hat"

At the risk of being called a chauvinist I would select as the best short picture of the year a Dutch one—*The Ballad of the Top Hat*. This selection I make with due consideration even after seeing Holland's worst picture, *One Evening in May*.

There is much to say for and against the institution of top hats. Consider the annual magazine (with a circulation of not less than three copies) which, I am told, alone champions the cause of this solemn monstrosity. Consider also the attitude of the 1937 flapper to top hats. Ask her about the subject and she will simply turn on the radio to any station and deafen you with a nauseating musical cataract of eulogies on the subject.

The new Dutch picture gives a funny, yet philosophical survey of the top hat's function in modern civilisation. It is a filmic essay describing the rise and fall of this solemn headdress. From the worthy but bald head of a diplomatist the top hat climbs down the social scale to the respective heads of a bald bridegroom, a gravedigger, a cab-driver and a street musician. The end is in a watery grave in a Dutch canal.

The social contrasts of the film are wide. There is a session in the League of Nations with the accompanying sound of rattling machine-guns. There is an incident when the top hat, recently the property of a street musican, becomes a football for two boys. With a clever pass they shoot it into the canal to the sound accompaniment of the cheers of a thousand-throated football mob.

Throughout the picture there is this contrast between camera and sound illustration and constant play with image and sound. The technique is advanced and quite free from stage influence.

Unfortunately *Ballad of a Top Hat* has been boycotted in Holland thanks to a personal misunderstanding between De Haas, the producer and the Dutch League of Cinematography.

ACCURACY—THE BASIS OF TEACHING FILMS

By K. R. EDWARDS (Production Manager, Eastman Kodak Teaching Films)

THE MOTION PICTURE has become so completely the special property of the picture palace that it seems quite natural for us to consider them as inseparable. The principal disadvantage of this restriction of the film to the theatre is the fact that it has established, in the mind of the average person, a very definite idea and pattern of what a motion picture should be like. In the picture palace each subject is treated on the basis of the dramatic formula of introduction, climax and conclusion—a conclusion which invariably dismisses the subject with an air of finality.

Educators agree that the textbook should not tell the whole story. It should present each problem in such a fashion that the student will be stimulated to inquire and eventually form conclusions on his own initiative. This is the theory upon which most textbooks and classroom practice are founded, but when this method is followed in the production of a motion picture the effect is, for the average individual, an anti-climax, for the reason that we have become so accustomed to having the film tell the story from beginning to end.

Movement and Action

In complete contrast to theatrical films, the teaching film seeks only to present an accurate image and faithful record of life photographed under unrehearsed conditions. It is assumed that the pupils will receive some preliminary instruction before reviewing the film, and that a discussion of the subject will follow. It is desirable, therefore, to avoid an air of finality in concluding the film.

The outstanding characteristic of the film is movement, action; and the selection of both the theme and the scenes and sequences illustrating that theme should be limited to subjects which can be shown either to the greatest possible advantage in motion pictures, or by no other means than through this medium.

The school has a large and definite number of objectives that must be reached within a more or less limited period, and it is essential, therefore, that the films have to do only with those subjects which are included in the curriculum and are directly applicable to the mental development of the pupil.

The ideal teaching film can be achieved only as a result of skilful and complete co-operation between pedagogical authority and the technique of mechanical production. The principal difficulty in achieving such co-operation is the lack of uniformity in teaching procedure—the absence of a standardised methodology. Films correlated with the text of a particular subject as it is taught in one school may or may not be suitable for use in other schools. This diversity in procedure is in direct proportion to the relative complexity of the subject matter. In practice this means that films on elementary subjects which involve a minimum of variation in teaching technique will attain maximum use and distribution, and will cost the least to produce; while more difficult subjects, involving greater variation, will find less use and cost more. If the producers are to live, they must make up on the simple films, produced for the lower grades, what they lose on the complex ones intended for the higher levels.

As a practical illustration of proper film structure consider a classroom film on the subject of geography. The average theatrical travelogue on the subject of a foreign country is usually limited to general views that emphasise the novelty in landscape and architecture characteristic of the country. For instructional purposes, scenes of this kind are in no way superior to still pictures on a printed page, or to lantern slides. The producer should proceed on the principle of Pope's frequently quoted statement that "the proper study of mankind is man," and should undertake to include in a teaching film only those scenes which will comprehensively illustrate the life of a people—their manners, customs, native arts, industries, agriculture and schools.

Translate in terms of people

The current evolutionary trend in education is favourable, fortunately, to the film. An example is the shift noted in the schools' approach to the teaching of geography; namely, from political boundaries to natural regions, which the screen —and the screen alone—is competent to present completely and comprehensively.

Knowledge of the world—human geography—is most easily understood when translated in terms of the lives of the people who live in it. The motion picture should not undertake to compete with the textbook, the map, and the blackboard, but should be devoted to an exposition of the realities of life which this medium alone can adequately approximate.

Scotland's Work Highly Organised

ACTIVITIES IN SCOTLAND in connection with the use of the cinematograph are now in a highly organised condition, and the graphical statement on the page facing shows the existing position.

Some two or three years ago it was realised that co-ordination of effort was needed if any real progress was to be made. Representatives of bodies interested in the use of the cinematograph met and discussed how the various interests could best be merged. As an outcome there came into being the Scottish Film Council, federating, for purposes of co-operation, all those interested in the educational, the cultural, the artistic and the industrial and commercial possibilities of the screen. The Film Council is definitely linked up with the British Film Institute from which it derives its funds. The Council operates through several Panels each dealing with a specific aspect of cinematography, such as education, social service, amateur production and entertainment.

Branch organisation

One of the federated organisations on the educational side is the Scottish Educational Film Association which itself came into being as a result of the merger of two earlier societies. The principal aim of the Film Association is to foster interest in and to promote the use of films and other visual aids in education. The branch organisation of the Association is a strong feature. Every branch is co-terminous with an education area, and it is therefore made easy for Education Committees to grant support since the membership of a branch is, in the main, drawn from their own teaching staff. One of the most important functions of the branches will be the viewing and assessment of educational films under the general control of the Scottish Film Council which has set up a Co-ordinating Committee and specialist Panels to receive and make final pronouncements upon the reports received from the branches of the Film Association.

Production groups

Another growing and interesting feature of the work of branches of the Film Association is the formation of groups for the production of films for use in the classroom. These will, of course, but serve a small part of the needs of the schools, but the experience should be helpful in leading teachers to realise the difficulties of the professional producer of educational films, and also in enabling teachers to afford more valuable advice as to the actual requirements of the schools.

The Social Service Panel of the Film Council has recently had an accession in the shape of those interested in the adaptation of the cinematograph to the work of the Churches. The Amateur cinematograph Panel has been the guiding force in the non-professional production of films, principally through an Annual Film Festival. The Entertainment Panel is endeavouring to raise the standard of appreciation of the fare provided in the ordinary cinematograph theatres by the circulation from time to time of lists of recommended films. The issue by the Council of a Scottish Film Bulletin, which has now reached a circulation of well over 6,000 copies, forms a useful link for all aspects of the more specialised use of the cinematograph in Scotland.

J. B. FRIZELL.

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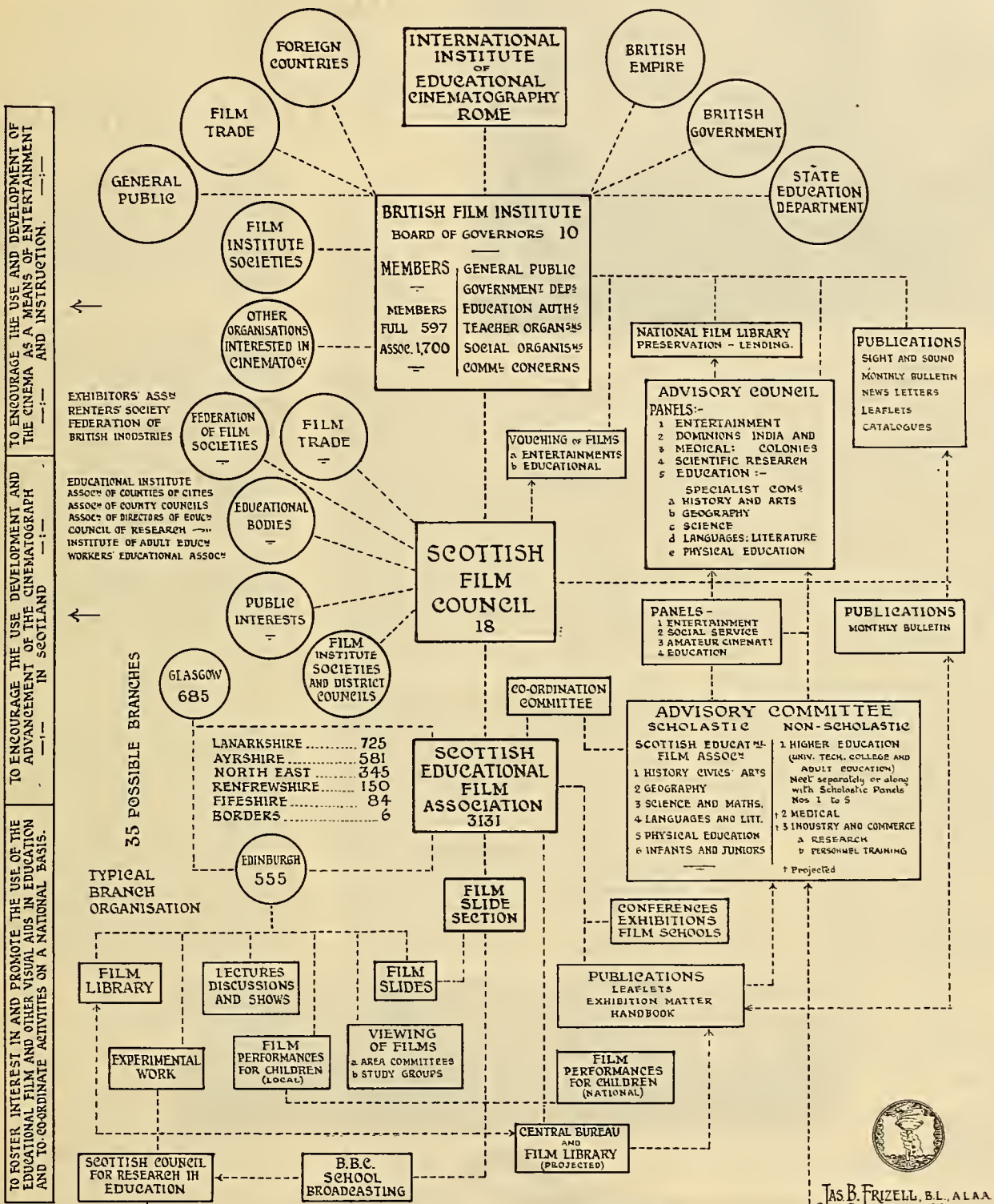
SCOTLAND—NON-THEATRICAL RELATIONSHIPS



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1936

JAS. B. FRIZELL, B.L., A.L.A.A.
City Education Officer,
EDINBURGH
President Scottish Educational Film Association

Newsreel Rushes by The Commentator

The Photo (left) and that used in our January number are reproduced by permission of Pathe Pictures, Ltd.

YEAR'S BEST NEWSREEL. When editors are asked why the finish of their reels is normally so rough, their most convenient, hence most frequent reply is: "We could do a lot better, but we're always so rushed, we simply haven't time." But at least once every twelve months that answer is no longer "Open Sesame" to the Main Exit from responsibility. For convention dictates—and newsreel convention rules hard—that the year's last issue shall be a Revue of the year's outstanding events, shall be an essence of the year's drama, pathos, grandeur, brutality, shall give one last cheer to the year's great man, shall have one last laugh on the year's fools. And because the Annual Revue is made up entirely from old material—it may be last week's, but that's old to a newsreel—the Production Departments have months for planning, weeks for cutting and re-recording, days for commentating and final publishing. Therefore, the Annual Revue is the year's best test of the production ability of a newsreel. Though by far the most important, production is by no means always the most prominent factor in a reel's make-up—many a story is made or marred in the camera or sound recorder. But now and then a reel depends entirely on the build-up of a smooth flowing, swinging story—one such is the Annual Revue. The 1936 batch of Revues leads to no new conclusions, instead piles up further proof of a fact that, through the year, has become more and more widely accepted—that in production, *Gaumont British News* looks down on its competitors from a mountain top. For "audience impact," the 1936 *G.B. Revue* not only is in a class by itself, but is being almost universally acclaimed by competent critics as the year's best newsreel.

Quick Fire Rhythm

BIG BANG . . . LITTLE TALK. Many a cinema story fails because it starts on a top note, hasn't enough breath to avoid going flat later. The *G.B. Revue* makes no such mistake. But instead of the safe way of starting pianissimo and working up, it opens with a big bang and keeps up such a racket of excitement until the fade out shot, as to leave its watchers in a state of mild sweat. To set and maintain such a quick fire rhythm is an outstanding feat—outstanding and unexpected too is another feature—the small part played by commentary. Event after event passes without even being identified, carries itself by force of picture, and sound or music alone. When Emmott speaks, he confines himself to the simplest facts, matches his words only to slightly less exciting pictures thus avoids the danger of giving his audience too much to take in. Between the sections of commentary, the track is a model of perfect blending of music and natural sound—all the exciting sounds are there—the sad feet at a King-Emperor's funeral, the relentless feet in the Rhineland, the symphony of a Derby crowd, the crackle of a Crystal Palace. For the rest, the right music in the right place is the artificial boost. An attempt to analyse still further the means whereby the superb all-round result is obtained:—

PICTURES. As it did last year, the *G.B. Revue* departs completely from a chronological order, instead groups the events under general heads—"Foreign Affairs," "Home," "Disaster," "Sport," etc. Hence it is possible to maintain a certain mood for two or three minutes at a stretch, avoid the muddling jumble of funerals and football, whirlwinds and weddings! But what boosts the reel more than any other single factor—the pictures. Chosen much less for the importance of the events which they portray, much more for their merit as "camera scoops," amazingly exciting shots follow one another in lightning succession. One shot of a weeping mother with her children conveys all the horror of the Spanish War better than a whole battery opening fire—the oiled mechanism of sprinter Jesse Owens at speed, breathes the spirit of the Olympic Games—disaster leaps from the screen with the death agony of a yacht and her crew in the froth of a U.S. hurricane, racing cars and bob sleds hurtling off the track into the air, airplanes dissolving into splinters. Many of the events will not be remembered a hundred years hence—it is known that at least one airplane crash was a staged stunt, that one car crash was several years old. But even if not those actual events, similar ones did happen during 1936, and purist grumbles about their historical unimportance cannot detract one atom from the thrill of seeing them represented in the newsreel year.

PRINTING. The *G.B. Revue* uses few optical printing stunts, only the simplest "side to side" wipes, plus blackouts and "over the page" titles between the main sections. But there are two innovations which may start a newsreel fashion :—(1) In several sporting finals, a close-up of the winner is printed into one corner of a general shot of the event, *i.e.*, Perry at Wimbledon, Pam Barton on the last green of the U.S. Ladies' Golf Final. (2) Through the sequence of aviation feats of the year, the dim outline of a whirring propellor is kept faintly superimposed over shots of Mollison, Mrs. Markham, Swain, etc., bringing unity to a whole series of diverse pictures. In fact, unity is the keynote of the whole reel—such unity of "pull" between pictures, sound, music, and commentary, as no other single reel achieved through the year.

FAMILY PHOTO ALBUMS. As against the "G.B. Revue" standard, discussion of the other reels centres on few virtues, many faults. Main weakness of all four can be summed up as, starvation of the pictures, indigestion of the commentary. All four are reminiscent of a faded family album, filled with pictures that are known to have been important at the time, but appear so no longer. Perusal of the album is accompanied by explanations of the obvious, by the family bore, unduly hurried because the guest will turn over the pages too quickly. The final impression is anything but clear.

MOVIETONE leaves perhaps the least muddle memory of the four, largely because it, also, classifies the events under general heads, rather than chronologically. But by sticking more closely to the formally important events, throwing overboard the "unimportant" thrills, it fails to achieve anything more than a measured, stately progress. And because both "G.B." and "Movietone" share the foreign pictures supplied by "Movietonews" of America, it is obvious that "Movietone" have not even made the best use of the material available to them. "Movietone" neglects to use natural sound to anything like its full value, also fails to realise that cinema-audiences cannot follow a mass of facts spoken at top speed for long periods without a break, and that too many stunt dissolves are an irritant to steady concentration.

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PARAMOUNT has most of the stock faults—the formal dullness—a commentator who keeps going most of the time, with most of the facts, at most of the speed of which he is capable—a half-hearted use of natural sound. But "Paramount" adds another fault, which it shares with "Universal" and "Pathé Gazette"—the chronological mix-up. Good shots: The blowing up of the Alcazar, the East End riots.

UNIVERSAL, because it can boast no sound unit, has all its "natural" sound re-recorded, relies to an even greater extent on the commentator supplying all the accompaniment. Certain it is that Jeffry makes a noble effort, not nearly so certain that he succeeds in being interesting for more than a fraction of the time. Proof that people cannot listen to commentary and watch an exciting picture at the same time (see above) comes when, over a "scoop" picture of the East End riots, Jeffry attempts a pun, it falls flat. Good shot: A London police horse struggling to avoid falling. Bold shot: A studio portrait of Mrs. Simpson.

PATHE GAZETTE. Better than any general description, the quality of the "Pathé Revue" is summed up with the following facts:—(1) It uses NO natural sound whatsoever. Close-ups of cheering crowds, of Pam Barton making a speech, of Garter King of Arms proclaiming a new sovereign, are all passed with a musical "silence." (2) The musical background is apparently made up from short lengths of library music, none too well matched to the picture. On the Trooping of the Colour, the Guards march in slow time to the accompaniment of a Quick Step—and halfway through the final shot of the Spanish war sequence, the music suddenly changes from a dramatic drum roll to a twinkly tune intended for the following event. (3) There are at least two stories included by all other reels, but omitted by "Pathé"—the Duke and Duchess of Kent and their son, and the Crystal Palace fire, though of the latter, "Pathé" had the only pictures of the actual fall of the roof. (4) Optical printing tricks, including wipes or dissolves of any type, are notable by their absence.

Co-ordinate Sound and Picture

ONE SYSTEM . . . ONE MAN. The conclusion reached from all this investigation is, that the old system of newsreel production, an echo from the first arrival of sound, is no longer able to cope with modern demands. The old system, as it still hobbles along to-day, implies that the editor should first completely cut each story silent, like a slice of dry bread, then hand the job on to the sound man, who spreads the butter, then leave it to the commentator to add the jam. Almost every production fault of the newsreels is due to variations of this system, still in force. Until it is thrown overboard, until editors realise that picture, sound, and commentary can be, must be, planned side by side, the unity of the "G.B. Revue" will remain an exclusive feature. The "G.B." production lead is due to the fact that the entire make-up of the reel, at the cutting, commentating, and re-recording, is under the control of commentator Emmott. Every shot is fitted into place with the full realisation of how it will be matched to sound and speech. In some American reels, the system is carried even further. The editor writes the commentary, alongside the picture and sound cutting, then watches the picture at the re-recording panel, controls the relative volume of sound, music, and speech, and cues the commentator for the start of each paragraph. The commentator watches only a red signal lamp, thus gives his full attention to the job of voice control. But whether it be the editor, the commentator, or anyone else, there must be one man with experience of two highly specialised jobs—newsreel editing, and the technique of the spoken word—to bring unity to the finished product. The more executives, the more cameramen, the more sound recordists, the more cutters, the more joiners, the more commentators, the more need for one man to combine all their efforts in the final production—that is the one system for the modern newsreel.

FOR FILM SOCIETIES

A Guide to Available Foreign Films

(Edited by J. S. FAIRFAX-JONES (Hon. General Secretary of the Southampton Film Society)).

CORRESPONDENCE WITH the Film Societies has shown us that there is need for a reasonably comprehensive list, periodically revised and enlarged, of films in demand by the Societies. We have therefore prepared such a list which is given below and which contains short particulars of each film, the approximate length, the name of the renter, the country of origin and other useful details. This list will be added to each month during the film society season. Enquiries are often received about early films which for various reasons are no longer available. A list of these is also appended. Brief notes as to the suitability of new continental films and shorts for Societies will be added from month to month.

Title.	Director or Star.	Country of Origin.	Approximate Length.	Renter.
Zéro de Conduite	Jean Vigo	France	4,000 feet	Film Society
Atalante	Jean Vigo	France	7,000 feet	Film Society
Sabra	—	Poland	—	Film Society
Maskerade	Paula Wessely	Austria	8,859 feet	Reunion
Episode	Paula Wessely	Austria	8,480 feet	Reunion
Son autre Amour	Jeanne Boitel	France	8,010 feet	Reunion
St. Petersburg	K. Tarassova	Russia	6,717 feet	Reunion
Jazz Comedy	G. V. Alexandrov	Russia	6,983 feet	Reunion
Hohe Schule	Rudolph Forster	Austria	8,139 feet	Reunion
Sans Famille	Robert Lynen	France	8,753 feet	Reunion
Reka	—	Czecho-Slovakia	7,296 feet	Reunion
La Crise est Finie	Albert Prejean	France	6,925 feet	British Lion
Poile de Corotte	Robert Lynen	France	8,970 feet	British Lion
Le petit Roi	Robert Lynen	France	8,210 feet	British Lion
Savoy Hotel 217	Hans Albers	Germany	7,500 feet	Wainwright
Potemkin	Eisenstein	Russia	4,446 feet	Progressive
Bed and Sofa	Room	Russia	—	Progressive
The New Babylon	Trauberg	Russia	—	Progressive
Storm over Asia	Pudovkin	Russia	—	Progressive
Sous les Toits de Paris	Rene Clair	France	8,302 feet	Wardour Films
La dame aux Camelias	Yvonne Printemps	France	9,990 feet	Exclusive Films
Paris-mediteranne	Annabella	France	8,124 feet	Exclusive Films
Der Hauptmann von Köpenick	Max Adalbert	Germany	7,000 feet	International
Merlusse	Marcel Poupon	France	6,700 feet	Tobis
Die Ewige Maske	Mathias Wiemann	Switzerland	7,100 feet	Tobis
Veille d'Armes	Annabella	France	8,860 feet	Tobis
Crime et Chatiment	Pierre Blanchard	France	8,820 feet	Tobis
Sylvia und ihr Chauffeur	Leo Slezak	Austria	7,340 feet	Tobis
The Crosspatch	Louis Borel	Holland	7,920 feet	Tobis
Maria Bashkirtseff	Hans Jaray	Austria	7,500 feet	Tobis
The Old and the Young King	Emil Jannings	Germany	8,249 feet	Tobis
Klein Dorrit	Anny Ondra	Germany	8,247 feet	Tobis
Musik im Blut	Hanna Waag	Germany	6,606 feet	Tobis
Letzte Liebe	Hans Jaray	Austria	6,750 feet	Tobis
Letzte Rose	Helge Rosewaenge	Germany	8,250 feet	Tobis
Reifende Jugend	Herthe Thiele	Germany	8,153 feet	Tobis
Der Schimmelreiter	Mathias Wiemann	Holland	7,040 feet	Tobis
Dood Wasser	Jan Musch	Holland	7,771 feet	Tobis
Lac aux Dames	Simone Simon	France	8,100 feet	A. P. and D.
Kameradschaft	G. W. Pabst	Germany	7,365 feet	A. P. and D.
En Natt	Molander	Sweden	6,500 feet	A. P. and D.
Atlantide	G. W. Pabst	Germany	7,300 feet	A. P. and D.
M.	Fritz Lang	Germany	8,818 feet	National Dists.
The Road to Life	Ekk	Russia	9,600 feet	National Dists.
Mädchen in Uniform	Sagan	Germany	8,206 feet	National Dists.
Kadetten	—	Germany	8,229 feet	National Dists.
Rasputin	Conrad Veidt	Germany	8,500 feet	National Dists.
The Testament of Dr. Mabuse	Fritz Lang	Germany	10,600 feet	Kinograph Dists.
Bonne Chance!	Sacha Guitry	France	6,700 feet	Denning
Remous	Jean Galland	France	6,840 feet	Denning
The Virtuous Isidor	Fernandel	France	6,030 feet	International
Hey-rup	—	Czecho-Slovakia	9,000 feet	Universe Film Services
Morgenrot	Rudolph Forster	Germany	6,624 feet	Wardour
Charlemagne	Raimu	France	7,300 feet	New Realm
Don Quixote	Chaliapin	France	7,072 feet	Equity-British
Westfront 1918	G. W. Pabst	Germany	9,289 feet	Film Society
The Brothers Karamazov	Anna Sten	Germany	8,436 feet	Reunion
Marchand d'Amour	Jean Galland	France	7,453 feet	Denning
Le dernier Milliardaire	René Clair	France	8,100 feet	Denning
Turksib	Turin	Russia	5,000 feet	Denning
The Student of Prague	Arthur Robison	Germany	7,781 feet	Denning
So Ended a Great Love	Paula Wessely	Germany	7,782 feet	Denning
Unfinished Symphony	Marta Eggerth	Germany	8,175 feet	Denning

THE FOLLOWING FILMS ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE:

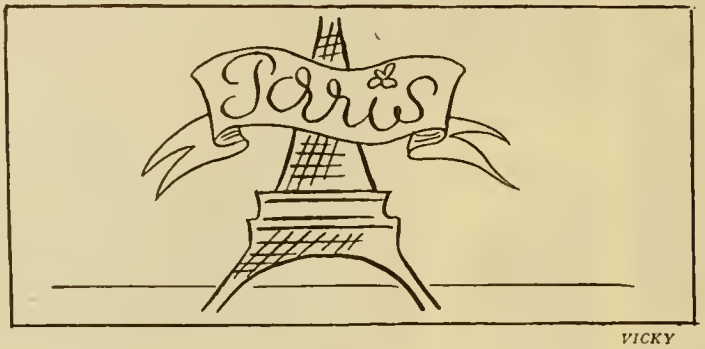
A Nous la Liberte, Le Million, The Blue Light, Der Träumende Mund, Ces Messieurs de la Santé, The Blue Angel, Liebelei, Bonne Chance! (after 30th March), *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Vaudeville, The Loves of Jeanne Ney, Emil and the Detectives, Refugees, Barcarolle, The End of St. Petersburg, Three Songs of Lenin.*

THE FOLLOWING FILMS HAVE NOT BECOME AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS:

The Deserter, La Kermesse Héroïque, Mayerling, The New Gulliver, La Bandera.

The lists given above comprise *long* films only. Lists of short films will be published in the next issue.

Filming a Foreign Town



VICKY

by Andrew Buchanan

This is the fifth of a series of tuition articles on amateur film production.

FILM POSSESSES A fundamental power which lifts it into a category distinct from all other media—an ability to acquaint one nation with another—to bring the remotest parts of the earth into our homes. Broadcasting, heard but not seen, is inclined to tax the imagination of the listener, and although graphic sounds of a relay from, say, New York, paint an accurate mental picture, Film, by appealing primarily to the eye, leaves very little to the imagination, and brings a true and vivid picture of foreign parts which leaves a deeper impression on the mind. Yet, despite this unique and valuable gift which Film bestows on mankind, only a small percentage of productions, professional or amateur, take advantage of it, although a full and proper use of the medium in this respect could do a great deal towards banishing the objectionable word, "Foreign," from the dictionary.

If you have travelled, you will have met those eager gentlemen who loiter at all great termini selling "Views of the City"—usually in sets of twelve—and whether you have travelled or not, you are bound to have seen the moving picture equivalent of those sets on the screen—endless long shots of bays and principal thoroughfares, divided, perhaps, by a close up of a native staring at you, the whole accompanied by a jovial commentator who strives to "popularise" the subject by introducing as many wisecracks as breathing will permit. They are travelogues, and though sometimes excellent, are usually inadequate. Just how inadequate may be realised by comparing them to *Song of Ceylon*—a picture which captured the real spirit of the place.

CAPTURE SPIRIT OF PLACE

The amateur director should approach his subject determined to create a film that will draw the members of his audiences right into the screen—making them walk through the bazaars, along the boulevards, or up the mountains. They must be made to feel the intense heat, or the lash of the wind: they must be made vividly conscious of everything characteristic of a place. To create such a picture, the conventional stringing together of "views" is not enough, for the first, and last thing to capture is atmosphere, and this is done, as I pointed out in *Filming a Town*, by securing images of countless significant and insignificant objects and mannerisms which, together, shall build up character. Only by penetrating beneath the surface can the spirit of a place be discovered, and captured.

Maybe, such a film could commence on the channel boat, by showing a pile of luggage or a car, on deck, the destination being revealed by fluttering labels. Then a first glimpse of the coast line, followed by someone gazing at it. Then a number of similar coast line shots, each one showing it definitely *nearer*, shot, say, every quarter of an hour—divided by glimpses on board of passengers stirring—collecting their things—throwing rugs down—deck hands sorting baggage—and other little signs that the boat will soon be in. Upon arrival, the scrambling porters on the quay, shot from a high position on the boat, make an interesting study, and perhaps their running feet might be merged into the wheels of the locomotive waiting to convey one to the final destination. Steam is escaping—it will be off soon. Someone is looking for his seat. He examines his large ticket a close up of which, in his hand, will be interesting. Where is he to sit? Place "dos" ver la machine, or Place "face" a la machine? He finds it, and the shot dissolves into locomotive wheels sliding past the camera.

ARRIVAL OF TRAIN

A whirling panorama of flat fields, chimneys and villages, punctuated by telegraph poles, shot from the carriage window, makes a valuable strip of film upon which to superimpose the arrival of the train at Paris, Brussels, Cologne, or wherever we are going. Assume it is Cologne. The above mentioned shot can dissolve into, or be overprinted on to a contrasting angle also from the window, showing the train winding its way over the great bridge of girders, and this, in turn, may merge into the station sign, KOLN.

DOMINATING CATHEDRAL

Now the dominating and obvious thing about a place like Cologne is its Cathedral, but instead of beginning by panning all over its vast exterior, I suggest that its influence over the city should be revealed, thereby creating a more subtle approach to the subject. Glimpses of priests mingling with crowds—shots of shop windows filled with cathedralesque objects, including miniature replicas of the building—several shots of picturesque corners and houses, ancient and modern, each one to include the enormous spires of the cathedral which loom over everything. Thus character begins to form. A close up of a clock showing 6.30 a.m. would be surprising if followed by shots of geranium-framed cafés busily serving coffee, and streets filled with earnest, bare-headed women, and hurrying men, for Germany starts its day early. I should then include a shot or two of the novel parking places for bicycles *near the cathedral*, showing how the machines are suspended on metal frames under awnings, and then make the camera study the low white trams, rather like tube trains, joined one to the other, *passing the cathedral*. In that way I should plant the essential spirit of the place, and gradually lead up to a more detailed analysis of architecture, or whatever feature demanded careful treatment.

In proceeding, I feel it will serve a more useful purpose if I leap from place to place, rather than attempt to concentrate upon any particular locality, for I can then show that the fundamental method of approach is applicable to any nation, city, or village. However, whilst in Germany, let us note such revealing and odd things as bedding hanging out of cottage windows to air—glasses of water served with pots of tea to "trink aftervards"—little girls with horseshoe loaves hung round their necks. And let us try to trace just why that Grimm fairy-tale atmosphere lingers in such old villages as Michelstadt, with its goblin bedecked fountain, its cobbled lanes, and old Rathaus.

Let us discover that one of the loveliest sights is the open air market, where vendors, under enormous coloured umbrellas, array their fruits and vegetables all over the Square. There is one at Darmstadt. The observant director should make a note about level-crossings being made of white scaffold poles from which wires suspend—he should remember that string quartettes play classical music in the streets, and that the hairdresser's sign is a brass plate. That along the banks of the Rhine gleaming automobiles mingle with oxen drawing prehistoric carts, and that all the trees in wayside orchards are numbered, and are let like houses.

CLOSE-UP OF CAFE CHAIRS

Nearer home, Parisian life is symbolised by the café, and the degrees of prosperity in the various neighbourhoods can be ingeniously portrayed by dividing the main film with close ups of café chairs. In the main boulevards they are of immaculate chromium, very modern and expensive looking, but in thoroughfares not quite so fashionable they begin to look tarnished. Later they are wicker. Further out they are made of iron. In the poorest quarters they are dull and shabby, or roughly painted in yellow, but whatever the neighbourhood every corner of the capital has its café, and the quality of the chairs and tables clearly reflects the character of the locality.

Such shots should be employed as "Chapter headings," dividing one section of the film from another, enabling the camera to traverse the entire territory smoothly, linking sequences by the association of one café chair to another. Another simple example of the value of the association of ideas is offered in the Champs Elysées, which possesses a giant statue of Poincaré, standing on a large boulder of rock which

News from Film Societies and Clubs

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY: A performance was given at the David Lewis Theatre, Liverpool, on January 12th, when Sacha Guitry's *Bonne Chance*—"a film concerned with the adventures of a man, a woman and a lottery ticket"—headed the bill. It was supported by *Canal Barge*, a Dutch film directed by Otto van Nevenhoff and M. Franken; Elton's *Housing Problems; The Band Concert* (Mickey Mouse) and *The Birth of the Robot*, Len Lye's Gasparcolor production for Shell. This society is a branch of the British Film Institute—the membership subscription being 2*s.* 6*d.* a year. Performances are strictly limited to members and their friends. The Hon. Secretary is J. Alex Parker, 5/6 Bluecoat Chambers, Liverpool 1.

EAST KENT FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary Miss M. M. Robson, M.A., 133 Northdown Road, Margate. This society was successfully inaugurated on October 25th last year, and since then *The Road to Life*, *En Natt*, *Remous*, *Night Mail* and *Colour Box* have been shown. January programmes included *The King's Stamp*, *Rainbow Dance* (both by G.P.O. Film Unit), René Clair's *Sous Les Toits de Paris*, Stanley Hawes' *Chapter and Verse*, and Pabst's classic, *Kameradschadt*, Anstey's *Enough to Eat?* (formerly titled *The Nutrition Film*), *Landbuilders*, and Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* are scheduled for showing on February 21st. Performances are held at the Cameo Cinema, Cliftonville. Membership has shown a steady increase at each performance.

SCOTTISH CHURCHES FILM GUILD: Though progress has been somewhat hampered by lack of money, membership of this Guild has been increasing steadily, and Lord Tweedsmuir has consented to be Honorary President of the movement. Sir Stephen Bilsland, Bart., The Right Rev. Bisbop Reid of Edinburgh, and Sir William E. Whyte are among the Vice Presidents. The membership is being divided into three groups, according to geographical disposition, each group functioning under an Honorary Secretary and arranging for its own programmes and film supplies. The headquarters of the Guild is at Edinburgh, under the chairmanship of Rev. A. H. Dunnett. The address of the Hon. Secretary, John G. Bridges, is 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh.

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY: At the performance held on Saturday, January 23rd, the Russian film *Deserter* by Pudovkin, was shown. This film was Pudovkin's first experiment with sound, and its making occupied two years. Much of the film is taken from actual events, such as the Hamburg dock-strike in 1931. Supporting films were *Papageno* and *Cover to Cover*. This society's programmes, which are sent to all Film Societies, contain an article on the art of the film, and comprehensive descriptions of each film shown.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY: At the second general meeting on December 12th, 1936, Rev. Ferdinand Valentine pointed out that progress had been made in all three groups, Production, Projection and Mime, and that the society was gradually forming the nucleus of a Central Film Bureau, which by arranging exchange of copyright will help to circulate Catholic sub-standard films throughout the world.

At the same meeting, Rev. Valentine was elected Organising Secretary and Rev. Francis Young, Chairman.

The January display included *Morning Offering*, *Holy Matrimony*, *Aran of the Saints*, *Mount Melleray* and *The Dominicans of Woodchester*. The next display is on February 3rd, at Millicent Fawcett Hall, when a new film entitled *Just for To-day* is to be shown. Tickets, price 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* may be had from the Organising Secretary, 36 Great Smith Street, S.W.1.

LONDON SCHOOLS FILM SOCIETY: A programme of educational films and a demonstration of Kalee projectors were given to the society at the Institute of Education on January 21st. On February 11th, at 6 p.m., a meeting is to be held at the G.P.O. private cinema to see some of the recent films produced by the G.P.O. Film Unit. An address is to be given by one of the leading officers of the Unit. So far as accommodation will permit, the society will be pleased to welcome any who are interested, but application must be made for tickets beforehand to the Hon. Secretary, 50 Ashridge Crescent, S.E.18. On February 18th, at 5.30 p.m., Mr. William Farr, of the British Film Institute, will speak on "Celluloid Text Books" at the Institute of Education. Admission is free, without ticket, to all interested.

THE METEOR FILM PRODUCING SOCIETY had the distinction of being the first amateur cine club in Europe to be visited by Senorita Ida Luciana, delegate of the Cine Club of Argentina, who is making a European tour for the purpose of securing an international membership for her club. Glasgow was her first stop on this tour, and she proposes going on to London, Berlin and Rome, with the hope of furthering a free exchange of films and information between the Republic and Europe.

The Senorita's club offers a silver cup for international competition amongst its members, the award being made to the film judged to have the highest artistic merit. Only members are allowed to compete, but films—which should be in the 16 mm. class, and not exceeding four reels—may be sent in from any part of the world.

The club's headquarters are in Buenos Aires, and it is as well to warn intending competitors that the Argentines take their films very seriously, and delight to compete with professional newsreel operators in securing local interest features.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY: The programme given at the Rivoli Cinema, Rusholme, on January 17th, was headed by *The Deserter*. This film—Pudovkin's first talkie—is a tragedy of class struggle, unemployment and economic crisis, followed by new leadership, new ideals and new generations—a film of penetrating satire by an inspired director. It was supported by two French films—*L'Hippocampe*, a study of sea-horses, and *The Pacific Problem*, a film of Japanese expansion in the Far East. *Hey Rup* is to be the feature film of the next show of the society on February 14th, and *Chapter and Verse* has been booked for the following month. All applications for membership should be made to The Secretary, 86 Hulton Street, Salford, 5. The subscription is 10*s.* a year.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY: *Raspoutine*, the classical German film of the strange personality who controlled Russia's destiny in the period before the Revolution, was the chief feature of a programme given on Sunday, January 24th, which also included Anstey's *Dinner Hour*, for the British Commercial Gas Association, *The March of Time*, Fischinger's *Lichtertanz*, and Robert Fairthorne's new mathematical notation for differential calculus, *The Equation* $X + X = O$. On the same day Dr. F. D. Klingender gave a lecture on *Social Backgrounds to American and Russian Films*.

Membership fee for the half season 1936–37 has been reduced to 6*s.* 6*d.* inclusive. This entitles members to one seat at the remaining three monthly performances and film lectures. Members may bring up to four guests to performances, and applications for guest tickets should be made to the Hon. Secretary, 8 King's Road, N.4.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD: In an attempt to give a lead to producers, members of the Film Guild have been invited to submit suggestions for (*a*) one-reel or two-reel documentary films, and (*b*) feature-length entertainment films, suitable for presentation at the Scottish Empire Exhibition in 1938. Two prizes of a year's subscription to the WORLD FILM NEWS will be given for the best suggestions in each class.

The programme given on January 10th at the Caley Picture House, included *The Red Army* (G.-B. Instructional), *Soap Bubbles*, Len Lye's *Birth of the Robot*, and Pudovkin's *Deserter*. A discussion at the Caledonian Hotel followed the show. Jean Vigo's *L'Atalante*, which contains "probably the finest things the cinema has yet given us," was shown on January 31st. Hon. Secretary: Douglas A. Donald, 16 Great King Street, Edinburgh, 3.

NOTE: All Film Society and Club News should reach W.F.N. not later than the 10th of each month.

Filming a Foreign Town—(contd.)

was transported from the Forest of Fontainbleu. A close up of that boulder would cut neatly to a similar close up of one of the hundreds of rocks lying in the Forest, thus enabling the camera to leave Paris and continue its pilgrimage in Fontainebleu without a break or a jolt.

In Brussels there always seems to be a quantity of very large and fashionable ladies, and the reason may be due to the equally large number of Patissiers, famous for enormous and ultra-sweet cakes. Stout, hardy women with men's voices sell newspapers, which are strapped to their waists. Anyone sits anywhere in Brussels—it is friendly and honest. Cafés are sprinkled with children drinking cocoa, and priests drinking wine—the white metal helmets of the police, and the English-looking shopfronts are worth a few shots, intermingled with some close ups of lace. It is by these little, and, at first sight, unimportant incidents and objects that the true underlying character of places is built up, and I strongly advise the amateur to scour a locality for material, noting everything before attempting to shoot.

HUMAN INTEREST

When he has definitely created what may be termed an impressionistic prologue, he is justified in beginning leisurely surveys of all the usual sights. But his main duty is to reveal the fact that each place he visits is inhabited by human beings, who, with past generations, have made the city what it is, and consequently, by firstly showing the creators of a place, the complete picture which follows, portraying the results of their labour, will be more easily understood and remembered, and what is of even greater importance, the true spirit of the locality, which hovers over everything and everybody, will be actually felt by the audience at home.

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppets in Gaspar-color).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Slatinay, George Pal

BIRKENHEAD: The Empire	Feb. 15, 6 days
BRISTOL: Gaiety	Feb. 8, 3 days
CARLISLE: Palace	Feb. 22, 6 days
DARLINGTON: Empire	Feb. 15, 6 days
DUMBARTON: Picture House	Feb. 22, 3 days
LONDON: Imperial, Edgware Rd.	Feb. 1, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Manor	Feb. 18, 3 days
Scala	Feb. 4, 3 days

And So to Work (A comedy of early morning rising).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Richard Massingham

BARNSTAPLE: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 25, 3 days
BATH: News Theatre	Feb. 25, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Curzon, Old Swan	Feb. 4, 3 days
Gaumont Palace	Feb. 4, 3 days
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd.	Feb. 15, 7 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Feb. 14, 4 days
SOUTHAMPTON: Regal	Feb. 7, 7 days

Beat the Retreat (Dunning colour cartoon).
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
DRAWN BY: Anson Dyer
RECITATION: Stanley Holloway

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd.	Feb. 22, 6 days

Beside the Seaside (Documentary of South Coast resorts).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

GLASGOW: New Parade, Dennistoun	Feb. 8, 6 days
GREENOCK: B.B. Cinema	Feb. 18, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Balfour, Darnall	Feb. 25, 3 days
SOUTHEND: Kursaal	Feb. 22, 3 days
UPPINGHAM: Rutland Cinema	Feb. 3, 4 days

Cable Ship. (Documentary of the G.P.O. Cable Ships at work in the Channel).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Stuart Legg

BLACKPOOL: King Edward	Feb. 7, 7 days
LEEDS: Imperial	Feb. 25, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Grand	Feb. 24, 2 days

Cavalcade of the Movies (in six chapters).
DISTRIBUTION: Butcher's
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd.

Chapter 1	Feb. 8, 6 days
Chapter 2	Feb. 15, 6 days
Chapter 3	Feb. 22, 6 days

Coalface (Poetic treatment of coal-mining).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: G.P.O. Film Unit
SOUND DIRECTION: Cavalcanti

BLACKPOOL: King Edward	Feb. 7, 4 days
CHEADLE HULME: Elysian	Feb. 22, 3 days
GATESHEAD: Bensham	Feb. 18, 3 days
KILMARNOCK: Ayr Film Society	Feb. 14, 1 day
LEEDS: Imperial	Feb. 25, 3 days
MARKET DRAYTON: Town Hall	Feb. 22, 3 days
NEWCASTLE: New Cinema	Feb. 15, 3 days

Cover to Cover (A documentary of book production).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw

ALDERSHOT: Empire	Feb. 14, 7 days
BARNSLEY: Empire	Feb. 1, 6 days
COLCHESTER: Empire	Feb. 1, 6 days
DONCASTER: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 15, 6 days
DUMBARTON: Picture House	Feb. 1, 3 days

Cover to Cover—*continued.*

HULL: Regal	Feb. 1, 6 days
LEEDS: Majestic	Feb. 8, 6 days
LONDON: Kensington	Feb. 15, 6 days
MONMOUTH: Picture House	Feb. 4, 3 days
NORTH SHEILDS: Princes	Feb. 8, 6 days
READING: Pavilion	Feb. 15, 6 days
SOUTHEND: Astoria	Feb. 21, 7 days
SUNDERLAND: Plaza	Feb. 25, 3 days
WEYBRIDGE: County	Feb. 4, 3 days
WINCHESTER: Royal	Feb. 22, 3 days

Dragon of Wales (A travelogue which attempts to tackle economic problems).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard

NEWARK: Kinema	Feb. 15, 3 days
MOTHERWELL: La Scala	Feb. 18, 3 days

Fire Fighters (Film of the London Fire Brigade).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Peter Colin

BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	Feb. 1, 6 days
BRIGHTON: Academy	Feb. 7, 7 days
GLASGOW: Granada, Parkhead	Feb. 22, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Ritz, Anfield	Feb. 8, 3 days
Smithdown Picture Play-house	Feb. 8, 3 days
ROCHDALE: Hippodrome	Feb. 1, 6 days
SHEFFIELD: Crookes Picture Palace	Feb. 25, 3 days
Lansdowne	Feb. 8, 3 days
Palace, Tinsley	Feb. 25, 3 days
Palace, Wincobank	Feb. 25, 3 days
Sunbeam Picture Palace	Feb. 11, 3 days

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns (Historical Survey of European affairs for the past 40 years).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: A.B. Svensk Filmindustri
ENGLISH VERSION: Donald Taylor

MATLOCK: Cinema House	Feb. 1, 3 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Jesmond Picture House	Feb. 18, 3 days
News Theatre	Feb. 1, 6 days
OXFORD: Scala (Film Society)	Feb. 7, 1 day
POTTERS BAR: Ritz	Feb. 25, 3 days
PUDSEY: Picture House	Feb. 15, 3 days

Happy Hampstead (North London's playground in many moods).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: R. B. Pearce

REDDITCH: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 18, 3 days

Islands of the Bounty (Islands associated with the famous mutiny).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

CLYDEBANK: Palace	Feb. 18, 3 days
KILMARNOCK: Regal	Feb. 18, 3 days
LEATHERHEAD: Picturehouse	Feb. 11, 3 days
MACCLESFIELD: Majestic	Feb. 15, 6 days
MOTHERWELL: La Scala	Feb. 4, 3 days
PRESTON: Theatre Royal	Feb. 22, 6 days
ST. HELEN'S: Savoy	Feb. 15, 3 days
WALTON: Astoria	Feb. 11, 3 days
WIGAN: Princes	Feb. 22, 6 days

Key to Scotland (Documentary of Edinburgh).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

EDINBURGH: Lyceum	Feb. 8, 6 days
Ritz	Feb. 8, 6 days
GLASGOW: Kings	Feb. 25, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Empress	Feb. 4, 3 days
LONDON: Monseigneur, Charing Cross	Feb. 15, 3 days
News Theatre, Victoria	Feb. 25, 3 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House	Feb. 4, 3 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Feb. 25, 3 days
REDDITCH: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 15, 3 days
STIRLING: Regal	Feb. 25, 3 days

Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	Feb. 25, 3 days
ECCLES: Broadway	Feb. 22, 3 days
ELY: Majestic	Feb. 4, 3 days
GRANTHAM: Empire	Feb. 4, 3 days
HULL: Savoy	Feb. 22, 3 days
OAKHAM: Regal	Feb. 8, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Palace, Tinsley	Feb. 11, 3 days
Palace, Wincobank	Feb. 11, 3 days
Unity Picture Palace	Feb. 1, 3 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the northward trip of the Postal Special).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Basil Wright and Harry Watt for G.P.O. Film Unit.

BELFAST: Ambassadors	Feb. 15, 3 days
Lyric	Feb. 1, 6 days
CARLISLE: Palace	Feb. 22, 6 days
FOWEY: Cinema	Feb. 4, 3 days
MANCHESTER: College Tech.	Feb. 9, 1 day
MARKET DRAYTON: Town Hall	Feb. 4, 3 days
PETERSFIRLD: Savoy	Feb. 25, 3 days
SALE: Savoy	Feb. 4, 6 days

Rainbow Dance (Colour fantasy).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Len Lye

OXFORD: Scala	Feb. 1, 6 days

Secret Hiding Places (Priest holes to be found in English country houses).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Granville Squiers

BATH: News Theatre	Feb. 8, 3 days
BIRKENHEAD: Plaza	Feb. 18, 3 days
BIRMINGHAM: Odeon, Warley	Feb. 15, 6 days
CHESTER: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 15, 6 days
CHICHESTER: Plaza	Feb. 8, 6 days
DERBY: Odeon	Feb. 22, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Bedford	Feb. 15, 3 days
LONDON: News Theatre, Victoria	Feb. 15, 3 day
Studio Two, Oxford St.	Feb. 25, 3 days
Tatler, Charing Cross Rd.	Feb. 1, 6 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Feb. 18, 3 days
WEYBRIDGE: County	Feb. 22, 6 days

Shorts (*cont.*)

"Secrets of Life" Series (Imaginative description of natural processes).
DISTRIBUTION: G.-B.D.
PRODUCTION: Mary Field for G.-B.I.
TECHNICAL SUPERVISION: Percy Smith

Baby on the Rocks
LONDON: Monseigneur, Charing Cross — Feb. 25, 3 days

Butterflies and Beetles
GLASGOW: Mecca — Feb. 3, 2 days

He Would A-Wooing Go
LONDON: Monseigneur, Charing Cross — Feb. 15, 3 days

Queer Diet
BUCKINGHAM: Chandos — Feb. 22, 3 days

Thistledown
LONDON: Monseigneur, Leicester Sq. — Feb. 1, 3 days

Wake Up and Feed
DUNDEE: Forest Park — Feb. 28, 3 days

Seventh Day (How London spends its Sunday).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: A. P. Barralet
CHESTER: Tatler — Feb. 1, 6 days

Six-thirty Collection (Documentary of West-End Sorting Office).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Edgar Anstey, Harry Watt
LEEDS: Cosy — Feb. 4, 3 days
PWLLHELI: Town Hall — Feb. 18, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Chantry — Feb. 25, 3 days

Song of Ceylon (Documentary).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Basil Wright
PORTSMOUTH: News Theatre — Feb. 7, 4 days

Under the Water (French documentary with submarine photography).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Marcel de Hubsch
ENGLISH COMMENTARY: Alan Howland
ABERDEEN: Palace — Feb. 8, 6 days
CARLISLE: Lonsdale — Feb. 22, 6 days
GRAVESEND: Majestic — Feb. 21, 7 days
HULL: Rex — Feb. 8, 3 days
LONDON: Electric Palace, Highgate — Feb. 22, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Savoy, Sale — Feb. 1, 3 days
PORTSMOUTH: News Theatre — Feb. 1, 3 days

Weather Forecast (The gathering of information for official forecasts).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson
DIRECTION: Evelyn Spice
CLIFTONVILLE: Cameo Film Society — Feb. 21, 1 day
DARTMOUTH: Royal Naval College — Feb. 20, 1 day
HUDDERSFIELD: Savoy — Feb. 25, 3 days
MIDDLETON: Savoy — Feb. 15, 3 days

Advertising Film

On Parade (Puppet film in colour).
DISTRIBUTION and PRODUCTION: Gasparcolor for Horlick's Malted Milk Co.
DIRECTION: George Pal
AYLESBURY: Pavilion — Feb. 1, 6 days
LONDON: Blue Hall, Edgware Road — Feb. 1, 6 days
PORTSMOUTH: Troxy Theatre, Fratton Park — Feb. 6, 6 days
STAINES: New Empire — Feb. 1, 6 days

Foreign Films

Der Ammenkoenig (The banned German comedy).
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford Street Following *La Kermesse Heroïque*

Ernte ("Harvest"—German).
DIRECTOR: Geza von Bolvary
STARRING: Paula Wessely
LONDON: Academy, Oxford Street Feb 1, indefinitely

Merlusse (French school drama).
PRODUCTION: Les films Marcel Pagnol
STARRING: Henri Poupon
OXFORD: Scala — Feb. 15, 6 days

Old and Young King (German film of Frederick I of Prussia and his son).
DISTRIBUTION: Tobis
DIRECTION: Hans Steinhoff
STARRING: Emil Jannings
OXFORD: Scala — Feb. 18, 6 days

Regine (Drama of a German engineer).
DISTRIBUTION: Tobis
PRODUCTION: Erich Waschneck
DIRECTION: Hermann Orund
STARRING: Adolf Wohlbruck, Luise Ullrick
LONDON: Forum, Villiers Street Feb. 1, indefinitely

Remous (French sex problem drama).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Edmond Greville
STARRING: Jean Galland, Jeanne Boitel
CAMBRIDGE: Rendezvous — Feb. 22, 6 days

Savoy Hotel 217 (German).
DISTRIBUTION: Ufa
DIRECTION: Gustav Ucicky
STARRING: Hans Albers
OXFORD: Scala (Film Society) — Feb. 7, 1 day

The Student of Prague (Austrian sound version of the famous silent film).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Arthur Robison
STARRING: Adolph Wohlbruck, Dorothea Wieck
GLASGOW: Salon — Feb. 15, 3 days

Unfinished Symphony (Original German version).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Willi Forst
STARRING: Hans Jaray, Marta Eggerth
OXFORD: Scala — Feb. 15, 3 days

Veille d'Armes (French Naval melodrama).
STARRING: Annabella
OXFORD: Scala — Feb. 1, 6 days

Feature Films for February Release

As You Like it (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Paul Czinner
STARRING: Elisabeth Bergner, Laurence Olivier, Sophie Stewart, Henry Ainley, Leon Quartermaine

Dodsworth (United Artists)
DIRECTOR William Wyler
STARRING: Walter Huston, Ruth Chatterton, Mary Astor

Gorgeous Hussy, The (M.-G.-M.)
DIRECTOR: Clarence Brown
STARRING: Lionel Barrymore, Joan Crawford, Robert Taylor

His Lordship (Gaumont-British)
DIRECTOR: Herbert Mason
STARRING: George Arliss, Romilly Lunge, Rene Ray

Man Who Could Work Miracles, The (London Films)
DIRECTOR: Lothar Mendes
STARRING: Roland Young, Joan Gardner

My Man Godfrey (Universal)
DIRECTOR: Gregory La Cava
STARRING: William Powell, Carole Lombard

Road to Glory (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Howard Hawks
STARRING: Fredric March, Warner Baxter, Lionel Barrymore, June Lang, Gregory Ratoff

Sabotage (Gaumont-British)
DIRECTOR: Alfred Hitchcock
STARRING: Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, John Loder, Desmond Tester

Sing, Baby, Sing (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Sidney Lanfield
STARRING: Alice Faye, Adolphe Menjou, Gregory Ratoff, Ted Healey, Patsy Kelly, The Ritz Brothers

Texas Rangers, The (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: King Vidor
STARRING: Fred MacMurray, Jack Oakie, Jean Parker

Three on the Trail (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: Howard Bretherton
STARRING: William Boyd, Muriel Evans

A. R. F. P.

Associated Realist Film Producers have completed their first year as representatives of all that is best in the realist film movement.

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ASSOCIATED REALIST FILM PRODUCERS
33 SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.1 Gerrard 2484

QUOTED

A tidal wave of publicity followed the analysis of British film finance in the January issue of World Film News — a tribute to the respect in which the paper is held wherever films are intelligently discussed.

Continuing our policy of revealing the realities behind the cinema, a new and authoritative analysis of the public's true feelings about the films they see is being undertaken and will be reported on at intervals.

world FILM news

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world FILM news

HOMAGE TO FRED ASTAIRE

TOLSTOY ON THE CINEMA

SCREEN BIOGRAPHIES (1912-36)

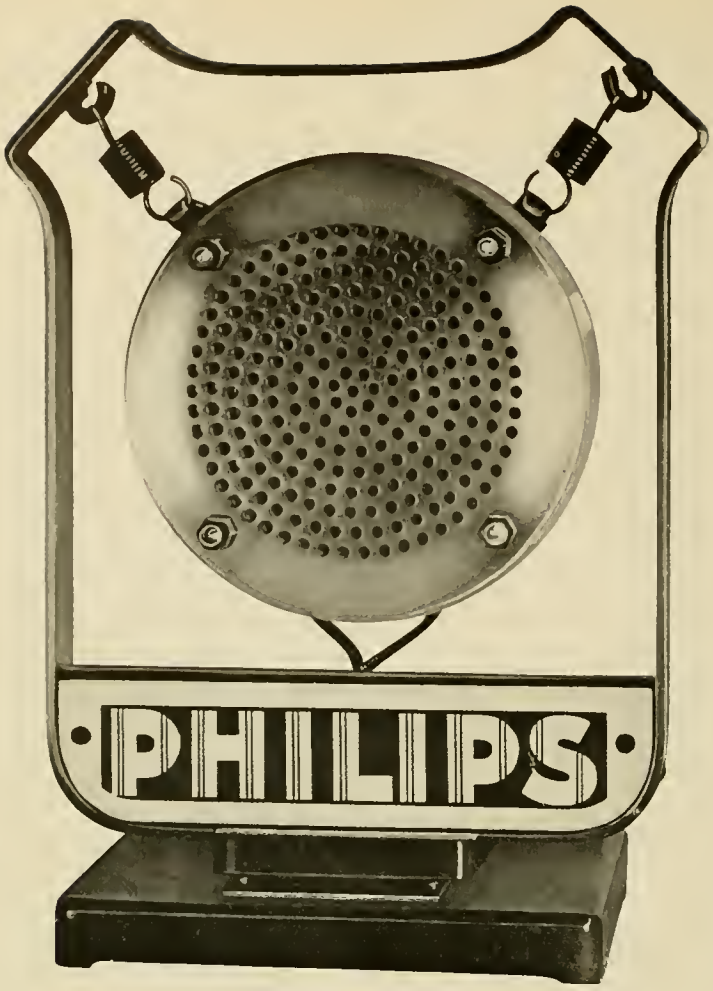
LADY CAVENDISH

JOHN GRIERSON

JIMMY WONG HOWE

JACQUES FEYDER

MARCH 1s



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GOOD NEWS FOR EXHIBITORS

At various times I visit the Studios to see the "rushes" of our new pictures. This has made me hard-boiled and sparing in recommending pictures unless I am positively certain of their appeal. I am not attempting in this statement to sell you pictures, but I think you ought to know that some of our forthcoming films, "rushes" of which I have seen, are so exceptional that in your own interests you should make it your business to see them.

Last week I saw the rough print of "BULLDOG DRUMMOND AT BAY" and I declare without any reservation that just as the Press regarded the book as the best of the series of Bulldog Drummond stories, so our picture is the most brilliant of the Drummond pictures that have yet been shown. It is perfectly cast with John Lodge as Hugh Drummond, Claud Allister as Algy, Victor Jory as Gregoroff and Dorothy Mackaill as the wise-cracking Doris; its thrills, tempo and contrasting comedy touches make it a top-liner in any house anywhere.

I also saw Mary Ellis in "GLAMOROUS NIGHT." This, as you know, is the film version of Ivor Novello's tremendous Drury Lane success. In my opinion, the picture is superior to the play and Mary Ellis gives a truly remarkable performance. The film glows with romance; the music is excellent and that, as you know, your audiences crave for. "GLAMOROUS NIGHT" will equal the box office receipts of any pictures brought from abroad and will delight audiences everywhere.

The latest British National picture, "THE STREET SINGER" starring Arthur Tracy, which I have seen, for superb singing and entertainment beats anything he has done previously, and the packed houses which greet him on his present provincial tour assures you that he is now at the height of his popularity. "THE STREET SINGER" is a crackerjack picture with which you will make lots of money.

These films, I submit, together with smash hits such as those we have recently shown—pictures like "PLEASE TEACHER," "AREN'T MEN BEASTS," "THE DOMINANT SEX," "SENSATION," "KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN" and others, establish Associated British as the foremost British film Company.

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world FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

VOL. I NO. 12 PRICE: ONE SHILLING MARCH 1937

HOMAGE TO FRED ASTAIRE

by Lady Cavendish—

celebrated in the show world as Adele Astaire

By arrangement with "Variety"

YOU KNOW THOSE four little worry wrinkles that droop away from a dachshund's eyes, and make it look so sad and so terribly appealing? Sometimes Fred's got that look to me. Maybe that's why I love dachshunds —they remind me of Fred. When I get back to Ireland I'm going to get eight of them. Big dachshunds that will have little dachshunds romping sadly all around. I can look at them and see Fred.

Fred was never satisfied with anything he'd do on the stage. Couldn't believe it was good. That's the way he is about his pictures, only more so. As much more as a picture is bigger, is a greater responsibility, than a show. He takes it so hard you can't talk to him about it. You say maybe you don't exactly think the stories are too well suited to him, and he thrusts that chin out and demands, "What's the matter with 'em?" He's more sensitive than ever.

But, you know films are evidently the most nerve-racking things in the world. Oh, much worse than the stage. Of course on the stage it's every night and in the films it's just once—but that once is for ever. It must be, it should be, at least, perfection. Fred feels that. But the mental hazard's that much greater. Fred works hard, very hard. After everything else there is always his own endless rehearsing. He never likes anything he does. He puts so much into it, he's so close to it—it comes so hard to him, he thinks——that he just won't believe he's finally reached it when it's finished. He can't believe it's any good. So when people tell him they like it, he thinks they're being nice. Trying to let him down easy. Yet one little criticism, and he gets mad. He blows up, but quickly, and it's over. Then afterwards he says, "Yes, you were right. It stinks."

All the time he's climbing, he's worrying he's slipping. He said to me, "You'd think after all these years in show business, my whole life, I'd have achieved some feeling of security. That I'd have earned at least that. But no, I've got less now than when I started." Or is it the one of Laurel and Hardy that Fred reminds me of—that one with the chin down to here?

Still, maybe if he had nothing to worry about he wouldn't be happy. That's it. He's happiest working because he's happiest worrying. But at least when he's worrying, he's working.

I remember in the old days when we used to rehearse. Fred was the one who wanted to go on and on. He was the one who wanted to practise. He wouldn't stop till he got it right. I was the one who always wanted to go eat something. I hated to practise. I'd snatch at any excuse to quit. I haven't the artist in me that Fred has. Funny, for I was the one who was brought up for the stage. But Fred. He wouldn't sit down until the step was right not if it took all night. Not if it took all winter.

So we'd rehearse and practise and practise and rehearse and then somehow, someway, opening night, I'd manage to make it. How, I never knew. Hysteria probably. We'd all have dinner together at six o'clock opening night. In our rooms in the hotel in Philadelphia, say. Last time, Tillie was with us too. That was opening night of *Band Wagon*. We sat at dinner, all of us but we didn't eat. We didn't drink, because I can't. We talked. About anything. Not about the show. Oh, gosh, nothing about the show. We talked, and then we didn't know what we were saying. We couldn't hear each other. For now we were all laughing. We were all being so funny, so cockeyed brilliantly funny. We yelled. We screamed. We roared. Next morning, they told us we'd opened in *Band Wagon*. We hardly knew it. We never remembered a thing that happened. We had to get like that. We'd never have been able to face opening nights otherwise.

Opening night I'd reach it, I'd do it the way Fred wanted, and then after the show'd been running a while, I'd start missing. I'd start to tangle. Maybe I'd miss a step, so in

getting to the wings I'd stroll off frightfully blithe, acting very cute (I thought) outfoxing him, telling myself, "Now; never mind. He won't notice that—it was such a little thing." But he'd be waiting for me. "Babe, you missed a step tonight," he'd say, very patiently. "Think we'd better stay after the show and rehearse," and somehow no matter what I wanted to do instead, no matter where I thought I had to go, there he'd have me rehearsing for hours, teaching me the routine all over again.

I remember one night in *Funny Face*. I can't drink at all—it makes me giffy. But one night I went to a cocktail party before the show and I forgot and took two cocktails. It wasn't more than two. There must have been something strange about them though, for I got to the theatre all right and got my make-up on and went out to do my first number with Fred, feeling mightily gay, that's all. Just terribly gay, I thought. But when I got out there, I began singing helter-skelter around the words, and music too, clambering around like a colt. Yet even through the haze I could feel Fred seethe. What's the matter with Fred, I wondered. By the time we got off, he was in a violent rage. I was so stunned—he'd never been like that before with anybody, least of all me. I was so shocked I couldn't say a thing. It sobered me smack up. Which was the best thing that could have happened, because I finished the show all right and I was grateful. But poor Fred. He suffered all night about it. Didn't know what to do. Next day he apologized and bought me a charm for my bracelet. He wanted to make it up to me some way, anyway.

I know more four letter words, and use them, than anyone on earth. Fred's so shocked at the things I say. But he always defends me. "She can get away with it somehow," he says. "They don't mean anything when Adele says them."

But he's just got to be honest. He's got to be frank. "Take that hat off, it's terrible," he'll say to me, or "That dress, it kind of makes you look too wide." And he's always said to me "Adele, whatever you do, never lose your figure. I hate a woman with a broad behind."

He's very observant, Fred. His taste is as good about women's clothes as it is about his own. Of course, Fred is clothes mad. He's always been. He tries on ten ties before he chooses the one he likes well enough to wear. When he goes to his tailor he studies clothes and mulls over them for hours, weighing the merits of this plaid against that check, and yet, damn it, he always looks so casually gotten together, so off-hand, as if he never gave it a thought. Even in England they give him credit for being well dressed. They don't usually do that with an American.

It just knocks me cold, how he's developed. No, it isn't that he's developed. He's always had what he's got now, but it never got a chance to show till I left. He was always staying in the background himself, always pushing me forward. He'd stand back while I got the laugh. Always playing straight for me. So when I finished, things came out he didn't know he could do himself. All the numbers we used to do, they were all Fred's ideas. I couldn't think up a thing if it killed me. It was all his. It certainly wasn't mine. And one day Fred's going to knock them cold with his acting. I know. I knew it first when he did the ballet with Tillie Losch in *Band Wagon*.

If people would only realize when they ask me why I don't do a picture with him—they ask me that all the time, and were quite keen on it while I was in Hollywood—if they'd only realize that he's gone 'way ahead of me. Why, I couldn't begin to keep up with him. I couldn't even reach the steps he throws away.

His dancing's the same. But it grows up. It has the same individuality it always had. It grows up every year. He doesn't say to himself, "Now that such-and-such a thing has hit, I'm going to learn it." He's always inventing.

When he first went into the films, I used to recognize some of the steps. "Aha," I'd say to myself, "I know where that came from, Mr. Fred," and smuglike, I used to wonder when he'd do our run-around routine, our Oom-pah trot. Well, he hasn't done it yet. Maybe he's waiting for me to grow a long grey beard before he springs it. No, I scarcely recognize any of his steps now. Not any more. Where does he get it? That comedy number he does with Ginger in *Follow the Fleet*. That one ought to be right up my street. I should know each little flick of it. But no. It's full of new things.

His singing. The first time I heard his voice on the radio I was home in Ireland; mother was with me. One night the radio was on. All of a sudden they announced Fred. It was just before *Gay Divorce* opened in London as a show. Fred started to sing. He went on. Why, he was even hitting those high notes that used to scare us. It was grand. We cried a little.

Later, after *Gay Divorce* opened in London and I could come over to see it—I'd been ill and couldn't make the opening—I went to see him. I'd never seen him from out front before. It was also the first time I realized that Fred had sex appeal. Fred. Wherever did he get it? He's so unconceited looking.

I've heard about that sex appeal since. All the women I know tell me about him. In England they say they want to mother him, to nestle that funny face of his on their chinchillad bosom. He's got sympathetic appeal. It's a sympathetic puss.

There was a time when faces like Fred's couldn't come near a studio. But now it seems they don't particularly stress prettiness any more. It's as if they won't have a face that they don't have to struggle with. Blot out a chin or something. A face so handsome you don't need to do a damn thing except photograph it, they won't bother with. It seems that way.

I remember when Alex Aarons thought it would be a good idea to send us to England. Well, they looked at our pictures and then they told Alex, "Charming, doubtless, but not very good looking. The English like good looking people." We didn't go to England, not then, but in 1923, Sir Alfred Butt risked it. He took a chance with us, put us in *Stop Flirting*. And the English overlooked our faces.

There were other shows after that. Runs here, then over there. *For Goodness Sake*, *Lady be Good*, *Funny Face*. Same way with Fred's films. They like them in England too. Also his phonograph records. I'm taking back hundreds of his new recordings for our friends. It's wonderful to be in show business today. If you're good, you're a triple threat. The stage, the films, the radio. If you're good at one thing, they want you for all.

I wonder if you remember when Fred and I danced together? They always watched him.

Fred and Adele Astaire in "Lady be Good" at the Empire Theatre, 1926

(*Courtesy Play Pictorial*)

THE FINEST EYES IN CINEMA

by John Grierson

Here, one documentary producer discusses the work of another. This is the first aesthetic estimate of Flaherty's "Elephant Boy," which will undoubtedly be the most discussed film of the year.

ELEPHANT BOY is based on Kipling's Toomai of the Elephants. John Collier worked on the script and Korda was the producer, but most people will, I expect, be less interested in Kipling, Collier and Korda than in the director Flaherty. So established now is the tradition of *Nanook*, *Moana*, *Tabu* and *Man of Aran*, that filmic expectation lies with the old master who first taught us what a realist cinema could mean. A few directors like Capra are slick as the devil. A few greater ones like Griffith, Eisenstein and Pudovkin strike a gong in film history and teach us a new command of the medium. Fewer still, and these I think are the greatest directors, provide us with whole philosophy of cinema—a fresh vision which, glancing past all questions of skill and technique and even sometimes past success itself, give us an inspired sight of things. Of these is Flaherty. Vertov talks of the kino eye, but Flaherty, who never talks of it, has it. Those who like myself have known him for a long time remain in this sense his students. We can whack him in theory and out-distance him in economics but the maestro has caught the eye of the gods.

Oxford in the Jungle

If ever proof were necessary how old fashioned the Kipling idiom has become it is here in *Elephant Boy*, Walter Hudd, the pukka sahib Peterson, hunter of elephants, is Kipling to the bone. The patronage of the jungle is perfect. There is the fairy pomp of the sahibs and, to the rhetorical parlance tale of the all too fairy-tale hunters, are added the wood notes wild of the Oxford accent. But striding through the jungle in a golden track is the other thing: Flaherty with his elephants and Toomai the boy. They are real and in the great tradition of cinema: seen and, with affection, felt. So far as I am concerned, nothing in cinema this year is likely to show anything like it, and despite the cluttering incidentals of Kiplingesque nonsense, I am grateful.

I find the film nicely symbolic for I have watched Flaherty for some years striding in just such isolation through the synthetic jungle of movie. One time picturing a Hollywood director "on his knees" before a radio in Samoa, trying to get the Coconut Grove orchestra from Hollywood; another time describing the exhortations of a producer after seeing the women of Moana, to "fill the screen with all they've got"; Flaherty has been defending sometime or other against the synthesists all his life. He would call it "a sense of smell."

The Studio Mind

Elephant Boy begins magnificently. Toomai is set on the back of the highest elephant of all Mysore: in his youth and innocence giving a dignity to the Indian people one has never seen before on the screen. One is prepared for anything. The great herd of wild elephants is signalled. There are expectations of a jungle more exciting than the jungle of *Chang*, and of a relationship between man and nature as deep again as *Nanook*. Something of this does, in fact, come through. The father dies and the great elephant goes mad and, crashing through the camp, escapes. The boy, following, at last sees the mythical dance of the wild elephants. The elephants in a storming trumpeting mob are driven into the stockade and the boy weeps as the elders award him the insignia of a great hunter.

But enter Messrs. Kipling and Korda and the studio mind. I do not blame it: I merely note the alien strangeness of its juxtaposition in this film. With its synthetic spectacle of studio camp scenes and West End voices it brings the film at every turn to an artificial, different plane. It comes between the boy and the jungle, and the full perspective of reality is not realised. They say an elephant will go mad on the death of his master and that he will go more mysteriously mad *just before* the death of his master. Nothing of this. Synthesis steps in and, an actor, in a fake beard, lashes the elephant to give a more occidental motive for madness. The jungle might have been with its thousand eyes the image of all young and ardent odysseys. Nothing of this either. The film drives on under the lash of the synthesists to the mere circus excitements of an elephant hunt.

East is East

It takes Flaherty to remind us that we film people live in two worlds, and the two, Kipling fashion, do not often meet. The studio mind does not understand the realist mind, nor vice versa. One hopes continually a producer will arise who will take a genius for great observation like Flaherty's and combine it naturally with the forces of the studio. Korda has not in this case quite succeeded in being that producer. He has not fully appreciated the possibilities of Flaherty's observation and nursing it, given it the shape of great drama. Though the film is exciting and will be popular it is embarrassed aesthetically on this misunderstanding.

Flaherty would be the first to say that of all producers Korda has the most developed taste and all of us will recommend the gallantry with which, in spite of his own different sense of drama, he has backed *Elephant Boy*. But this only emphasises the problem.

We shall need further experiments in production before the great film qualities which Flaherty represents are brought fully to the screen.

JIMMY WONG HOWE

Cameraman of "The Thin Man," "Viva Villa," "Transatlantic," "Fire Over England"

"In Hollywood we are not paid to use our imaginations"

IN A LITTLE Chinese restaurant in Soho Jimmy Wong Howe, the Chinese-American cameraman who made *Viva Villa*, *The Thin Man* and *Transatlantic*, told me of all that disappointed him about British films.

"Cameramen don't photograph the object," he said, "but light reflected from the object. In California the light is so strong and dry that chemically it is often out of focus. Over here you have what we call the 'third plane.' Over there, there is foreground and background, but nothing in between. Artificial means—smoke pots and so on—have to be used. Here there is a natural mist in the air that Hollywood would give its heart for, because it acts as a soft filter and gives a diffused light, beautiful pictures with all harshness eliminated. It is excellent for colour films too: the brilliance of Californian colour is so great that the chemicals resist it and the pictures are blurry.

"And yet in England," he appealed to me despairingly, "why is it that your producers shut themselves up in studios? A wall in a British studio is just the same as a wall in Hollywood. Can't they *see* how fortunate they are? Cornwall, Devonshire—all the world envies your opportunities to make beautiful pictures. The slow dawns, too, and the long twilights: they should forget about midday and give the cameraman a chance."

"The closing sequences of *Tabu?*" I reminded him.

"Yes!"

"And how about Flaherty?" I asked. "Don't you find his work distinguished?"

"He is a brilliant artist. Yet, at times . . . he uses such heavy filtering—those black skies—he over-corrects sometimes and the effects tend to be unnatural. Of course, he does it to express a mood, but one becomes too conscious of the photographer. In *Fire Over England* I've got a moonbeam effect, for instance, which, after I had photographed it, I knew was all wrong—over-emphasised. The showman putting it on too thick."

"The old German films must have interested you," I said. "The U.F.A. style?"

"Yes. I read Gunther Krampf's article in WORLD FILM NEWS last month, and I tried to disagree with it, but I couldn't! But I think he is wrong to speak of the curse of dialogue. Dialogue was only a nuisance when it was a new toy. After all, films must tell stories, and dialogue takes unnecessary work off the cameraman's shoulders.

"During the great German period photographers ran wild. They used pictures to startle people, just as sound was used when it first arrived. But those films would look overdone to-day. Of course, the style suited fantasies—*Faust*, *Metropolis*—but it is unacceptable in modern fantasies, because dialogue brought naturalism with it. Nevertheless, they were enterprising in those days."

"And to-day photographers aren't enterprising enough?"

"They forget imagination! Lenses aren't used emotionally. A scene may demand one kind of lens for a simple photograph, and quite another if a dramatic effect is to be conveyed. If you have to get a mob scene, packed tight with people, oppressively close, you would ordinarily use a wide-angle lens. But if you use a telescopic lens you would make the mob appear more dense and compact than it really is. Long focus lenses draw the background towards the foreground into one plane. A wide angle lens pushes everything back, scatters everything. In Hollywood we are not paid to use our imaginations."

"When we made *Transatlantic*, for example, William K. Howard, the director, came to me and said, 'All sea pictures are the same. How can we get a different feeling—something unusual?' I thought, 'Lighting has been used up; the only way is by means of lenses.' So we shot the whole picture in wide-angle lenses, forgetting about close-ups. Of course, women couldn't be photographed with a wide-angle lens—it distorts, and they don't like that, you know."

"You seem to have made Myrna Loy interesting easily enough."

"Because she is clever. Most men and women on the screen want to be good-looking instead of interesting. I have to study their little idiosyncrasies and individualities and catch all their piquant angles and expressions. Myrna Loy's cleverness is that she knows just as well as I do what effects to get. Unlike the many sudden upstarts in Hollywood, she has had long experience, and she meets a cameraman half way."

"How would you compare European and American photography?"

"The great difference is in the laboratory work. Take *La Kermesse Héroïque*. The photography is good, the laboratory work bad. The photographer got soft high lights and half tones which were distorted—values were lost—like a bad newspaper reproduction. There is a certain granular effect on the screen, a chemical fog, which comes of too much bromide and not enough sulphide, and it spoils so many British pictures. In America they respect the laboratory department of the studio far more than over here.

"But it is good enough, you know. It is the subjects of British pictures that make them so disappointing. Why not make a film about Hyde Park, for instance? In London, I am told, you have fogs so heavy you cannot see, and blind people come out and guide people to their homes. What a picture could be made out of a subject like that!"

John Barber

EDITORIAL

Shorts in the Balance

THE CINEMATOGRAPH EXHIBITORS' Association has addressed a letter to Mr. Runciman, President of the Board of Trade. They take exception to the recommendations of the Moyne Committee, set up to advise the Government on film legislation, and they object particularly to Lord Moyne's recommendations in favour of short films.

They say: "Any quota imposed in the matter of short films will represent a maximum of exhibition and they will be a constant source of friction within the trade and they will never be worth their rentals. . . . If importers had to acquire British shorts the supply of foreign shorts would be curtailed and this would not suit our business nor the normal public. We repeat with emphasis our request to the committee that the quota upon shorts should be abolished."

The film trade is notoriously stupid when it comes to taking a national point of view. The short film does much to describe the life of the country and of the Empire and is a valuable aid to national projection. In short films, moreover, this country has achieved a high international reputation. Its *Secrets of Life* films are a model of their kind and the technique of its documentary films is the only technical contribution by the British cinema which other countries have thought worth copying. For these reasons alone the Moyne recommendation of a 10–15 per cent. quota must carry the backing of all good citizens.

The national interest is one thing, but what are we to think of a film industry which does not know how to consult its own domestic interests? The short film is a training ground for young technicians. It represents an opportunity—or shall we say a blooding ground?—for new capital. It provides a field for technical experiments to be tried and new contributions to the art of cinema initiated, within sensible economic limits. It provides an element of variety for British programmes. In an article last month Mr. Harry Langdon cited the unusual number of great American directors who had graduated from the field of American shorts—among them Capra, Lloyd, Del Ruth, Zanuck and Milestone.

Witnesses before the Moyne Committee advanced these arguments and the Committee was sufficiently impressed by their weight to recommend a development of short films in Britain. It is ironic that a government committee should demonstrate a more far-seeing sense of showmanship than the showmen themselves.

Whitehall Might Note

MARCH OF TIME has, we hear, been again under fire. This, the most vital of all contributors to public discussion on the screen, recently issued an item describing the problem of physical fitness in Britain. It mentioned Mr. Duff Cooper's difficulty with recruits and cited the scientific findings of Sir John Orr on the subject of nutrition. In one London theatre, the Cameo, the item was cut: to the great advantage of the Tatler nearby for all London flocked to see this realistic account of a matter of great public importance.

Complaints have been voiced by associates of the Conservative Central Office who maintain that the item is one-sided and, in its references to unfit recruits and malnutrition, an unfair reflection of the fair face of Britain. We have put the Conservative case to the editors of *March of Time* and they raise a point in reply which should command the attention of all Government Departments.

The March of Time, its sponsors assure us, is strictly non-political. They point to the British items which have already appeared. Some clearly, like *British Shipping*, *British Films* and *Civil Aviation*, have done a national service, for the huge circulation of *March of Time* in America and the Dominions—a matter of 8,000 odd theatres—has been opened to the story of British achievements. In other sequences like the *League of Nations*, the *Tithe War* and *Britain's Health*, the *March of Time* policy has been to maintain an open forum in which all sides of a public problem are presented.

We understand that, in the case of *Britain's Health*, Sir Kingsley Wood was not in a position to make a contribution to the discussion. This misfortune will no doubt be rectified in future. No Government Department can afford to ignore nine thousand theatres which vitally affect opinion in Great Britain, the Empire and the United States.

Lion Rampant

THERE IS GREAT TO-DO in the north about films of Scotland. The lead has been taken by the authorities of the Scottish Empire Exhibition which is due in Glasgow in 1938. Plans are being made which will describe the life and work of the country and a deputation will presently cross the border to ask Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Korda and other London producers to put down a Scottish subject for their 1938 schedule. The argument advanced is that Scotland's contribution to film revenue deserves a better return than the Yankee version of *Mary of Scotland* and the Hungarian-Franco-American version of *The Ghost Goes West*.

The case for Scottish films goes deeper than nationalism. If the special qualities of Scottish life and character are conveyed to the screen in dramatic terms they will represent a welcome addition to British film materials. There is an intensity in the Scottish sense of drama which might come to exercise a healthy influence on the more namby-pamby agonies of the West End. There is a debunking quality in Scottish humour which might provide a measure of relief from the emptier antics of the Messrs. Walls and Lynn. We suspect too that in Scottish village life there is the same wealth of caricature and character which is now the special asset of the French cinema.

The only thing we ask is that when Scotland goes south with its movies, it will leave Harry Lauder, J. M. Barrie and Robert Burns behind. We can hardly believe that Harry Lauder is true. We do not care whether J. M. Barrie is true or not, for we have had much too much of him. As for the truth of Burns no Scotsman would dare to tell it, for fear of his fellow Scots.

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Bound Volumes

This is the twelfth issue of WORLD FILM NEWS. Readers who wish to have their copies bound should apply to the Editorial Office. A limited number of back issues for each month are available.

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Stalemate?

The appointment of Mr. Neville Kearney, secretary of the Film Section of the Federation of British Industries to a governorship of the Film Institute, makes the structure of the governing body just a little more difficult than before. It looks like becoming that *reductio ad absurdum* of representative bodies—a committee of secretaries. No doubt Mr. Kearney will defend the interests of the commercial producers to the utmost. That is his job, and he will do it with his usual ardour and skill.

But if all the secretaries of all the sectional interests pursue their professional loyalties, what a picture of stalemate it conjures up.

An early Queen Elizabeth. Sarah Bernhardt in the 1912 French version acquired by Zukor for Paramount

FROM Sarah Bernhardt TO Flora Robson

★

VISCOUNT MERSEY'S recent motion in the House of Lords urging the government to take steps to ensure accuracy in historical films raises important issues. In demanding from the historical film the same standards of correctness as from the scientific or educational biology film, Viscount Mersey in effect denies the right of the artist, whether his medium be the film, literature or the paint brush, to use history as a subject for *artistic* creation. For a work of art, of whatever type, is essentially different from a scientific text-book or demonstration film. The ideas, the conceptions of life, expressed through the medium of historical themes in art differ widely in character. They may be straight propaganda for specific social aims, they may be more subtle attempts in which a particular situation of the past is held up as a mirror to the present, or they may be pure means of escape into the realms of fancy clothed in the settings of a former age. Most frequently they combine the elements of more than one of these types. Even where the aims of the artist are best served by as accurate as possible a picture of a given historical theme, it is essential for him to dramatise his subject.

* * *

The first epoch-making example of the historical film as a means of straight propaganda was Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*. For the basic theme of this film is the action of the former Southern slave owners who, despite their defeat in the American Civil War, re-conquered their former political monopoly by force of arms and constituted themselves as the Nation.

A similar example is provided by the cycle of films glorifying the reign and campaigns of Frederick II. of Prussia (*Friedericus Rex*, etc.), released in Germany during the early years of the Weimar Republic. The support given to this type of production by the Reichswher authorities and the enthusiasm with which they were greeted by the "nationalist" middle classes clearly expressed their longing, whipped to fever heat by the Ruhr invasion, for the return of a "glorious past."

On the other hand the great Soviet films from *Potemkin* and the *End of St. Petersburg* to *Chapaiev* exhilarated millions throughout the world with their stirring chronicle of the Russian workers' struggle for the establishment of a new world.

The fashion for history films which has swept the Anglo-American cinemas since the release of the *Private Life of Henry VIII* at the end of 1933 differs materially in the nature of its appeal from the other historical cycles. Its main accent is placed not on the epoch-making, but rather on the intimate personal aspects of the past. Its sphere is not Grand History, but the "Chronique Scandaleuse" (more or less discreetly veiled for censorship purposes) and the historical pageant. It is not surprising to find, therefore, that in the majority of cases history has become historical biography.

There could be no clearer indication of this tendency than the title of the film which opened the cycle. Henry VIII, more perhaps than any other monarch in English history, broke down the bulwarks of a whole epoch and paved the way for a new form of society. He created a new ruling class and established a national church. Yet, from his film "life" all his public actions without exception are eliminated and the attention of the audiences is directed exclusively to his private love affairs. A legion of *Rasputins*, *Catherines*, *Nell Gwynns*, *Queen Christinas*, *Du Barrys*, *Don Juans* followed to exploit the public interest in the erotic foibles of the great, or at best in the psychological problems of historical personalities, portrayed on a background of pageantry.

This type of appeal was nothing new for the film public. Even the figure of Henry VIII had been portrayed from this angle by Jannings in a film called *Anne Boleyn* (1924) and the same actor had provided superb examples of the psychological problem biography or character play in such films as *Ivan the Terrible* and *Tartuffe*. America had seen a *Private Life of Helen of Troy* and a *Madame Pompadour* (Dorothy Gish), both in 1928, and a *Du Barry* in 1930, to mention only a few examples and to omit a whole series of *Abraham Lincolns, Alexander Hamiltons* and *George Washingtons*. Moreover, only a short time before the release of *Henry VIII* Anglo-Saxon audiences had been thrilled with continental films such as *Congress Dances* and *Rasputin* (both Conrad Veidt, 1932).

* * *

Until the release of the Korda film, trade experience in the English-speaking countries had proved the unprofitability of the "period picture." Even if due allowance is made for a quint-essential concentration of the recipe (human foibles of royalty plus pageantry) in *Henry VIII* and for its technical qualities, the outstanding success of that film cannot therefore be accounted for on that score alone. It must rather be due to the fact that that recipe was just what was wanted in the Anglo-Saxon markets at the time when the film was released. History, the story of actual events, was sufficiently real to attract the interest of a public too absorbed in actualities to put up with fairy tales. Yet by transporting its audience to the past it avoided the dangerous ground of contemporary controversy.

THE CINEMA'S PAGEANT OF HISTORY

★

F. D. KLINGENDER

At the same time the prevalent impatience with conventions found a safe outlet in the piquant pleasantries of court amours. In this formula history no longer serves to fan the flames of contemporary zeal, it has become a new and refined form of escape.

* * *

A glance at the list (by no means complete) of recent historical films at the end of this article will show that the glamorous *chronique scandaleuse*, though greatly predominating, was not the only type of film produced in the recent history craze. The fashion for "period" shows once started, there was naturally also a certain supply of "grand history" subjects, though characteristically enough always with the main accent on the "great man" theory and invariably of the "schoolboy-history-with-a-moral" type, of which Mr. George Arliss is so masterly an exponent. (It should be noted that the first of the historical Arliss series in fact preceded *Henry VIII: Disraeli* 1930, *Alexander Hamilton* 1931. The later ones include *The Iron Duke* 1934, *Voltaire* 1934, *The House of Rothschild* 1935, *Richelieu* 1935 ; non-Arliss films of a similar type include the English films *Jew Suss* 1934, *Drake of England* 1935, *Rhodes of Africa* 1936, and the American *Clive of India* 1935). As the cycle advanced the national sentiment imperceptibly but clearly grew more intense in this sub-group of the historical species.

The stealthy re-entry of bear-garden patriotism by the historical backdoor was not, however, entirely unopposed. There was also a small group of films mainly advocating a counter-tendency and using history as a mirror of, instead of an escape from, contemporary reality. In this category, pride of place belongs—next to the non-biographical anti-arms racketeering film *The Man Who Reclaimed His Head.* (Universal, Claude Raines, 1935)—to the English film *Abdul the Damned* 1935, the theme of which is the liberal revolution that swept the last of the despotic sultans into oblivion. *Viva Villa* (1934) and *The Robin Hood of Eldorado* with their semi-legendary stories of revolt in an American setting also belong to this group.

The most valuable result of the history craze was the discovery that the interesting personalities and problems of the past were not exclusively confined to the members of reigning houses and their military chiefs or paramours. Writers, painters, musicians, showmen and scientists of the past have crowded our screens in increasing numbers (Schubert *Blossom Time* 1934, *Voltaire* 1934, *The Mighty Barnum* 1935, *The Great Ziegfeld*, *Rembrandt*, *Louis Pasteur*, all 1936 : Beethoven, Verdi, Alfred Nobel all under consideration). The treatment of these themes has varied from that of the light romantic musical to psychological studies of artistic creation, though naturally seen through the spectacles of the "Neurotic Young-Man-from-Bloomsbury."

The best contributions have undoubtedly come from America both on the hilarious showman-cum-racketeering level and on the serious interpretation group, by far the most outstanding example of which is *Pasteur*. This is the only case so far existing in which the personal problem is rendered profound by a universal historical perspective: the struggle for scientific advance against conservative prejudice.

The categories distinguished in this article are by no means water-tight compartments. They are tendencies prominent in the recent cycle of historical films and in many of the individual films they are blended in varying proportions. This is particularly true of the films outstanding through their quality. *Mutiny on the Bounty* 1936, is perhaps the most striking case in point. A character study of a complex and perverse personality is combined with a serious attempt to reveal a section of historical reality—the terrible conditions existing in the eighteenth-century navy that conquered an empire and the revolt which was the inevitable outcome. Yet this compound of thrills and emotions is so skilfully blended that the film ends by being an almost lyrical glorification of that very navy and empire.

EUROPEAN FIGURE-HEADS

Continental history film production during the last few years includes both the pre-crisis nationalism and the present biographical tendencies. From the two main fascist countries comes a host of the inevitable Fredericks, Bismarcks, Zeppelins, Napoleons, to which now are added Hitlers and Horst Wessels, while France and Austria produced mainly biographical films in which cultural and political characters are balanced in approximately equal proportions. Russia continued the revolutionary history tradition in Chapaiev, which shows, however, a distinct turn to more personal problems of character change ; cultural biography appeared in the O'Henry film, *The Great Consoler*, while character study and historical interpretation of a past epoch appear to be combined in the *Peter the Great* film now in course of production. Finally in the *Three Songs of Lenin* Russia supplied an entirely new type of film which is partly *documentary* biography, partly a lyrical portrait of Lenin's memory as it survives the different areas of the vast Soviet Union.

The latest Queen Elizabeth. Flora Robson in "Fire Over England"

List of Historical-Biographical Films, 1912-1936

(This list covers fully the historical-biographical films of recent years but only a selection is given from those of the 'silent period'.)

NAME OF FILM	*STARS*	*DIRECTOR*	*PRODUCER and/or DISTRIBUTOR*	*DATE*
Queen Elizabeth	Sarah Bernhardt			1912
Birth of a Nation		D. W. Griffiths	Allied Artists	1912
Last Days of Pompeii (Italian)			Intercine	1913
Intolerance	Mae Marsh Erich von Stroheim Bessie Love Douglas Fairbanks Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree Lilian Gish Monty Blue	D. W. Griffiths	Wark Films	1915
Robespierre	(From Victor Sardou's Play)		Cine Productions	1917
Winning a Continent (History of Africa)			African Film Productions	1917
Life of Lord Kitchener			Winds Production	1917
German Retreat and the Battle of Arras	(Official war film)		Jury	1917
Rasputin, the Power Behind the Throne	Montague Lane		World Brady	1917
Kaiser—Beast of Berlin	Ralph Julian		Western Import	1918
Cleopatra	Theda Bara		Fox	1918
The Crusaders			Guazzoni Productions	1918
My Four Years in Germany (From the book by Ex-Ambassador Gerrard)				1918
Rule Britannia (Official	Admiralty Production)		Butcher's	1918
On to Berlin	George Walsh		Fox	1918
Kaiser's Finish	E. Schenck		Fox	1918
Boadicea (British)	Elaline Terriss	Sinclair Hill		1918
Du Barry (German)	Pola Negri	Ernst Lubitsch	Decla-Bioskop	1919
The Crusades	All Star Cast		Jury Imperial	1919
Nelson	Malvina Longfellow Donald Calthrop Ivy Close		Apex Films	1919
The Romance of Lady Hamilton	Malvina Longfellow		Philips Film Company	1919
Salome	Theda Bara		Fox	1919
At the Mercy of Tiberias	Peggy Hyland		Gen. Film Renting Co.	1919
Christopher Columbus	George Wagner Madame Massart		Gaumont	1920
The Power of the Borgias	Enrico Ratentini Irene Sapho Momo		Gen. Film Renting Co.	1920
Barabbas (Twelve Episodes)			Gaumont	1920
Calvary	Malvina Longfellow		British Exhibition Films	1920
Battle of Jutland (Official war film)				1921
How Lord Kitchener was Betrayed			Screen Plays	1921
Disraeli	George Arliss Louis Huff		Allied Artists	1921
Queen of Sheba (1921 edition)	Betty Blythe Fritz Lieber	J. Gordon Edwards	Fox	1921
Julius Caesar				1922
Conquest of Canaan	Thomas Meighan		Famous Lasky	1922
Nero	Jaques Gertillat Alexander Salvini Paulette Duval Violet Merserea		Fox	1922
With Stanley in Africa (Serial)	George Walsh Louis Corain		F.B.O.	1922
Robin Hood	Douglas Fairbanks	Allan Dwan	Allied Artists	1923
The Ten Commandments	Richard Dix	Cecil B. de Mille	Paramount	1923
Bonnie Prince Charlie	Ivor Novello Gladys Cooper		Gaumont	1923
Catherine the Great	All Star		Walturdaw	1923
Conquest of Peru	(Lattimore and Dyott)		(not for release)	1923
The Crusader	William Russell		Fox	1923
Dauphin of France	Tibor Lubinski		Grangers	1923

Private Life of Henry VIII 1933

Abdul the Damned 1935

Chapaiev 1934

NAME OF FILM	STARS	DIRECTOR	PRODUCER and/or DISTRIBUTORS	DATE
Fall of Babylon	Constance Talmadge Elmo Lincoln		F.B.O.	1923
Guy Fawkes	Matheson Lang		Stoll	1923
The Loves of Pharaoh	Emil Jannings		F.B.O.	1923
Laves of the Mighty	Emil Jannings		Ideal	1923
Peter the Great	Emil Jannings		F.B.O.	1923
The Loves of Mary Queen of Scots	Fay Compton Gerald Ames		Ideal	1923
The Royal Oak	Fay Compton Henry Ainley		Stoll	1923
Salome	Nazimova		Allied Artists	1923
Samson and Delilah	Maria Corda		Stoll	1923
Sodam and Gomorrah	Lucy Doraine		F.B.O.	1923
The Virgin Queen	Lady Diana Manners		Rose	1923
Ziska	H. Leondiff		Gaumont	1923
Richard the Lion-Hearted	Wallace Beery		Allied Artists	1923
Marie Antainette	Dinna Kavenne		Moss Empires	1923
Anne Boleyn	Emil Jannings Harry Porter		F.B.O.	1923–4
Abraham Lincoln (1924 edition)	Ruth Clifford Neil Craig	Phil Rosen	First National	1924
Dick Turpin	Matheson Lang	Sinclair Hill	Stoll	1924
Beau Brummel	John Barrymore		F.B.O.	1924
Claude Duval	Fay Compton		Gaumont	1924
Henry, King of Navarre	Matheson Lang		Stoll	1924
Koenigsmark	Hugette Duflos		W. & F.	1924
The Nibelungs	Paul Richter		Graham Wilcox	1924
Dick Turpin	Tom Mix		Fox	1925
Helen of Troy			Cosmograph	1924–5
Livingstone	M. A. Wetherall		Hero Film	1925
Quo Vadis	Emil Jannings		First Nat.	1924–5
Battleship Potemkin		S. M. Eisenstein	1st Studio, Goskino	1925
Dick Turpin	Victor McLaglen	John Stafford	Gaumont-British	1925
Boadicea	Phyllis Neilson-Terry Clifford Maclaglen		Stoll	1926
Michael Strogaff	Ivan Mosjovkine		(European)	1926
Nell Gwynn	Dorothy Gish		First Nat.	1926
Mons, War Epic			New Era	1926
Nelson	Cedric Hardwick		New Era	1926
The King of Kings	H. B. Warner	Cecil B. de Mille	Paramount	1927
La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc	Mme. Falconetti	Karl Dreyer	Societe Generale de Films	1927
The Somme			New Era	1927
October		S. Eisenstein G. Alexandrov	Sovkino	1927
Pappies of Flanders			Wardour	1927
Land of Hope and Glory			Napoleon Dists.	1927
The Emden			New Era	1927
The Battle of Caronel and Falkland Islands	(Naval Epic)		W. & F.	1927
Ivan the Terrible (Russian)		Youri-Taritch		1928
Dawn	Sybil Thorndyke		W. & F.	1928
Madame Pompadour	Dorothy Gish Anthony Moreno		Paramount	1928
Napolean	Albert Drieudonne	Abel Game	Jury-Metro-Goldwyn	1928
Verdun	(War Epic)		Gaumont	1928
Private Life of Helen of Troy	Maria Corda Lewis Stone		First Nat.	1928
Burgamaster of Stillamond	Sir John Martin Harvey		W. & F.	1929
New Babylon		G. Kozintseu, Trauberg	FEA	1929
Ivan the Terrible .	L. M. Leonidov		Pro Patria	1928–9
Martin Luther	Eugene Klopfer		Alfa	1929
Rasputin	N. Malikoff Jack Treevor		W. P.	1929
Balaclava	Cyril Maclaglen Benita Hulme		W. & F.	1930
Du Barry	Norma Talmadge Conrad Nagel		United Artists	1930
Loves of Robert Burns	J. Hisslop Eve Gray		Ideal	1930
Abraham Lincoln (1930 edition)	Walter Huston Una Merkel Hobart Bosworth	D. W. Griffiths	United Artists	1930
Disraeli	George Arliss	Alfred E. Green	Warner	1930
Queen of Sheba (1930 edition)			Fox	1930
Alexander Hamilton	George Arliss Doris Kenyon	Jack Adolfi	Warner Bros	1930–1
Jenny Lind	Grace Moore Reginald Denny Wallace Beery		M.G.M.	1931
Joan the Maid	Simone Genvois		Wardour	1931
Danton (German)	Jannings		Ufa	1931
Dreyfus	Cedric Hardwick		B.I.P.	1931

NAME OF FILM	STARS	DIRECTOR	PRODUCER and or DISTRIBUTORS	DATE
Congress Dances	Lilian Harvey Conrad Veidt Henri Garat		Ufa	1932
Babarina	Lil Dagova		Beacon	1932
Capt. of Coepnick	Max Adalbert		International Productions	1932
Rasputin	Conrad Veidt		National Dists.	1932
The Great Comforter		Kuleshov		1933
Mata Hari	Greta Garbo	Clarence Brown	M.-G.-M.	1933
Henry VIII	Charles Laughton	Alexander Korda	London Films	1933
Rasputin	Lionel Barrymore	Richard Boleslawski	M.-G.-M.	1933
Chapaiev		G. and S. Vassiliev	Leningrad Cinema Trust	1934
Three Songs about Lenin		Dziga Vertov	Mezhrabpomfilm	1934
The Affairs of Cellini	Fredric March	Gregory La Cava	20th Century	1934
Barratts of Wimpole Street	Frederic March Norma Shearer Cedric Hardwick	Sidney Franklin	M.-G.-M.	1934
Blossom Time	Richard Tauber	Paul Stein	B.I.P.	1934
Cleopatra	Claudette Colbert Herbert Wilcoxon	Cecil B. de Mille	Paramount	1934
Don Juan	Douglas Fairbanks, Snr.	Alexander Korda	London Films	1934
Iron Duke	George Arliss	Victor Saville	Gaumont-British	1934
Jew Suss	Conrad Veidt	Lothar Mendes	Gaumont-British	1934
Nell Gwynn	Anna Neagle	Herbert Wilcox	British and Dominions	1934
Queen Christina	Greta Garbo	Rouben Mamoulian	M.-G.-M.	1934
The Scarlet Empress	Marlene Dietrich	Erich von Sternberg	Paramount	1934
Unfinished Symphony	Marta Eggert	Willie Forst	Denning	1934
Viva Villa!	Wallace Beery	Jack Conway	M.-G.-M.	1934
Voltaire	George Arliss	Jack Adolfi	Warner	1934
Abdul the Damned	Fritz Kortner	Karl Grune	B.I.P.	1935
The Cardinal	Matheson Lang		Wardour	1935
Catherine the Great	Elizabeth Bergner	Alexander Korda	London Films	1935
Clive of India	Ronald Colman	Richard Boleslawski	United Artists	1935
The Crusades	Loretta Young Herbert Wilcoxon	Cecil B. de Mille	Paramount	1935
Diamond Jim	Edward Arnold	A. Edward Sutherland	Universal	1935
The Dictator	Clive Brook	Victor Saville	Toeplitz	1935
Drake of England	Matheson Lang	Arthur Woods	B.I.P.	1935
House of Rothschild	George Arliss	Alfred Werker	United Artists	1935
Last Day of Pompeii (American)	Preston Foster Basil Rathbone	Ernst S. Schoedsack	Radio	1935
The Mighty Barnum	Wallace Beery Adolphe Menjou		United Artists	1935
Peg of Old Drury	Anna Neagle	Herbert Wilcox	British and Dominions	1935
Richlieu	George Arliss	Rowland V. Lee	United Artists	1935
So Ended a Greot Love	Paula Wessely	Karl Hartl	Denning	1935
Annie Oakley	Barbara Stanwyck	George Stevens	Radio	1936
The Beloved Vagaband	Maurice Chevalier	Kurt Bernhardt	A.B.F.D.	1936
The Country Doctor	Jean Hersholt	Harry King	Fox	1936
Daniel Boone	George O'Brien	David Howard	Radio	1936
The Great Ziegfeld	William Powell	Robert Z. Leonard	M.-G.-M.	1936
Mary of Scotland	Katharine Hepburn	John Ford	Radio	1936
The Last of the Mohicans	Randolph Scott	George B. Seitz	United Artists	1936
Mutiny an the Bounty	Charles Laughton	Frank Lloyd	M.-G.-M.	1936
The Old King and the Young King (Frederick the Great)	Emil Jannings	Hans Steinhoff	Tobis	1936
Pasteur	Paul Muni	William Dieterle	Warner	1936
Rembrandt	Charles Laughton	Alexander Korda	London Films	1936
Rhodes of Africa	Walter Huston	Berthold Viertel	Gaumont-British	1936
Robin Hood of Eldorado	Warner Baxter	William A. Wellman	M.-G.-M.	1936
Sutter's Gold	Edward Arnold	James Cruze	Universal	1936
Tudor Rose	Nova Pilbeam	Robert Stevenson	Gaumont-British	1936
The White Angel	Kay Francis	William Dieterle	Warner	1936
Whom the Gods Love	Stephen Haggard	Basil Dean	A.B.F.D.	1936
Chopin	Francis Lederer	Frank Capra	Columbia	1937
Danton (American)		Reinhardt	Warner	1937
Fire Over England	Flora Robson	William K. Howard	London Films	1937
I. Claudius	Charles Laughton	Cameron Menzies	London Films	1937
Madame Curie	Irene Dunne John Boles	John M. Stahl	Universal	1937
Parnell	Clark Gable	John M. Stahl	M.-G.-M.	1937
The Emperor of California	Louis Trencker		Trenker-film	1936

MEETINGS AND ACQUAINTANCES

ROBERT STEVENSON earned a reputation at Cambridge for ability before he turned to films. He was not only Editor of the *Granta*, President of the Union and a notable sportsman, but held high academic honours in mechanical engineering. His parents gave him six weeks to find a job when against their wishes he insisted on taking up film work. After five weeks' search he joined up with Gaumont-British, and co-directed Jack Hulbert comedies.

He achieved celebrity with *Tudor Rose*, and followed it up with *The Man Who Changed His Mind*, with Boris Karloff. Since then he has been working on *King Solomon's Mines* and is now busy with *Non-Stop New York* down at Shepherd's Bush.

Stevenson says: "Worth-while art conceals itself: if a film makes you want to praise the direction, there's something wrong with it. Look at *Mutiny*—where was the directorial

Robert Stevenson and Anna Lee

style to catch at? It was the subject, rightly, that got the praise, and that should be the height of the director's ambition.

"My *Tudor Rose*, now—the tempo was all wrong—too slow. After making that I used *The Man Who Changed His Mind* for experimenting with. I just tried out ideas, and then strung the results together. Now I am following up a costume picture, a 'horror' and an adventure story with a thriller. I want to try everything before I settle down to any one kind of subject. I'm 'de-typing' characters, building up the small parts . . . Take Anna Lee. The official studio idea is that she is a 'cutie.' Well, she is not a 'cutie' . . . In this film she plays a charlady's daughter, and I am letting her be that—just that. Realism—you can't make anything without it."

Nova Pilbeam

On the set, film stars fall naturally into two categories—the intelligent (those who use their own brains), and the not-so-intelligent (those who use the director's). Indisputably among the former is Nova Pilbeam, seventeen-year-old daughter of Arnold Pilbeam, who was for many years associated with the late Sir Nigel Playfair. She returns to the screen in Hitchcock's forthcoming thriller, adapted from Josephine Tey's best-seller *A Shilling for Candles*.

Although so young, Miss Pilbeam has several years acting experience to her credit. Marigold in *Toad of Toad Hall*; last year's Peter Pan, and the unhappily married Felicia in *The Lady of La Paz*—each of these contrasted characters has helped to bring her, step by step, to the front rank of West End stage stars, while at the age of fourteen she made her screen debut in *Little Friend*. Up to the age of sixteen, even during the production of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, she had to continue her education at school; to which she returned, strangely enough, with no regrets, to pursue her favourite subjects, history and composition.

Her portrayal of Lady Jane Grey in *Tudor Rose* was one of the most moving performances of 1936, due partly to her conscientious study of the part, partly to her innate sense of drama.

In *A Shilling for Candles*, the new Hitchcock film, she is to play the adventure-loving daughter of a chief constable, who joins in the search for the murderer of a girl found dead at the foot of Beachy Head, a search against a background of provincial workhouses, Magistrate's courts, seaside hotels, country inns and rural police stations.

John Maxwell

JOHN MAXWELL head of the Associated British Group, is a Scot. Once a solicitor in Glasgow, theatre interests gradually involved him in other branches of film. Since 1927 he has achieved the most commanding position in the British film industry—a position which the hectic promotions of the past two years have consolidated rather than diminished. Maxwell has known how to wait. In the clatter and din of a year ago one hardly heard of B.I.P. To-day, established on the canniest of policies, it is one of the few solid edifices we have.

His capacity for waiting, his organisation on long term policies and his realistic sense of business values have earned Maxwell a reputation for being hard boiled, but in personal relationships there is nothing of the heavy magnate about him. The freedom with which he discusses film affairs is in fact frequently embarrassing to journalists, though anything he says 'off the record' stays 'off the record.' Before the Moyne Committee he was the most outspoken of all witnesses in his description of trade conditions.

To-day, controlling Elstree and Welwyn Garden City studios, Wardour Films Distributors, Pathé News Reel, the A.B.C. Circuit of two hundred theatres and in line, many believe, for control of the similar vast holdings of Gaumont-British, the question is commonly asked whether John Maxwell is a great enough figure to lead the British film industry to the highest national and international standing.

No one doubts his ability as an organiser and all sensible men respect his steadfast refusal to speculate on hypothetical world markets. But the paradox of the British film is that while Maxwell represents our stability, Korda—less successful on the business side—represents our reputation. The accusation of the creative men against John Maxwell is that he is too cold a realist and has not yet

John Maxwell

demonstrated a creative sense commensurate with his influence.

Maxwell replies that the first necessity of a business man is to create a sound business, but, now that he has created it, a higher lead in national causes is generally expected of him. There is no question that Maxwell feels the challenge. He has already attached his theatres to the cause of housing and health and to such local causes as the Glasgow Children's Fund. He has provided a generous guarantee for the Empire Exhibition and it is reported that he is helping the new movement for Scottish films. The educational film, the cultural purposes behind the film society movement and many other worthy national causes would benefit from his co-operation.

PEOPLE OF THE STUDIOS

Denham

EMPTY CORRIDORS. Corridors that once echoed to the sound of busy, pattering feet. Where are they now? A few familiar faces. Rumours. . . *Cloudius* raises its gargantuan head under the patronage of Von Sternberg, assisted by Guy Boothby, photographed by Périnal. Settings have already been a sore point. Immense research has been carried out in Rome, with the assistance of Professor Ashmole of London University. Vincent Korda has produced a mass of large-scale drawings, grandiose and impressive, which have been countered by Sternberg's more intimate and voluptuous trend. Real bronze bedsteads from Rome, real scultures, real mosaics . . . . . The Art department seethes with real Roman activity. Morahan of the Art department up a ladder doing a frieze.

* * *

Script contributors to *Claudius* include Zuchmayer (German) then Graves (English), then Biro (Hungarian), Wimperis (English) and now Cohen (American, late R.K.O.).

* * *

What is stirring in the film vaults—that clanking of rusty cans? It is the return of *Taras Bulba*, quaint creation of Granowsky on the Hungarian plains. This 18th century Cossack epic could have made a magnificent film . . .

* * *

Cameron Menzies tirelessly directs *Four Dark Hours* assisted by Stanley Irving: camera by Borodaile. Menzies wants this film to have pace, concentrates on set-ups. He used to be an Art Director. Rene Ray acts with John Mills. Very good reports of Rene Ray. Graham Greene wrote the story; Wimperis, the dialogue.

* * *

The Denham laboratories will have their opening next month. Mr Schwartz presides. This building bears the Gropius stamp, the Gropius name, streamlined and finely proportioned. Inside, stark yet elegant efficiency. They can process for nine different companies. The developing system gives an output of 190-210 feet per minute. The cutting rooms contain novel German moviolas which can throw the image on to a small screen. This is an innovation. If necessary they can switch on to colour—except Technicolor.

Sound City

Pictures in production. *Merry comes to Town*, with Zasu Pitts. *House of Silence*, with Billy Bray and Jenny Laird. Macdonald directs *When the Poppies Bloom Again* for George King Productions.

Pinewood

The Frog has just been finished for Paramount. *The Midnight Special*, Grosvenor Films, has also been completed and is being cut. Sinclair Hill directed.

British National *Street Singer* is off the floor directed by Jean Marguenat. Dug Myers is cutting. This picture stars Arthur Tracy, Margaret Lockwood.

Also in the cutting-room is *The Navy Eternal*, Herbert Wilcox picture.

Wilcox's next picture will be *Vienna Sunset* with Tullio Carminati. This will be followed by *Victoria Regina*.

Ealing

The Girl in a Taxi is half completed. Berthomieux directs French and English versions. Tremayne is his assistant, Pitt cuts. D'Eaubonne is Art director. English players —Frances Day, Mackenzie Ward, Laurence Grossmith. French—Meg Lemonnier, Henri Garat.

* * *

The moral of the film finance row seems to be the need to prepare scripts in closer detail before shooting starts. An hour spent on the script saves hours on the floor. Arthur Dent points out that every alteration made on the floor necessitates half a dozen corrections in other parts of the script—and sometimes in parts of the picture that have already been shot. Even camera angles should be planned in advance. In addition, Marion Gering says that British production costs are twice what they should be, because of the lack of competent technicians in London.

* * *

At the League of Nations Headquarters in Geneva, it is suspected that *Francis Beeding*, author of "Six Proud Walkers" and many other thrillers, is not one man, but a combination of two of the most brilliant figures of the staff.

Beeding has just sold to B.I.P. rights for screen adaptation of one of their stories and finished work on a script for Hitchcock.

* * *

The flight of the humming-bird can only be perceived as a mere blur by the human eye, but can easily be analysed by slow motion photography. Long and complex biological sequences can similarly be speeded up. Dr. Julian Huxley's G.B.I. shorts (with Bruce Woolfe) use the camera so effectively in this way that the Royal Institution has installed a permanent apparatus for talking pictures.

Winterset *Radio*

U. S. A.

The coming year will probably see Broadway provide Hollywood with its full share of stage hits which, as already well-proven material, provide the Californian studios with almost certain box-office successes. Among those already completed and released in New York are *Winterset*, adapted from the Maxwell Anderson play and reviewed in the "Review of Reviews" columns of the February issue and that successful racing comedy, *Three Men on a Horse*, which Warner Brothers have made with Mervyn LeRoy directing and Frank McHugh playing the part of "Oiwin," the suburban writer of Mother's Day verse who is discovered to have an amazing ability for picking winners.

Goldwyn's Plans

Winterset, a study of gangster life in the Manhattan "bad lands," which lie along the fringes of the East River, has preceded a similar production, the Kingsley play, *Dead End*, another study of gangster life and gangster breeding which, as a play, enjoyed one of the longest runs on Broadway in 1936, and indeed is still playing to full houses in the Belasco Theatre. *Dead End* is being made by Samuel Goldwyn, who last year demonstrated the seriousness of his intentions, to say nothing of his ability, by adapting for the screen two other famous Broadway successes —*Dodsworth* and *The Children's Hour*, the latter being first judiciously censored by its authoress, Lillian Hellman, and given to the movie public as *These Three*. Sam Goldwyn also hopes to make a new version of *Stella Dallas* early in the year and has borrowed King Vidor from Paramount to direct it. Vidor's last work for Goldwyn was the much-discussed *Street Scene*, notable for being one of the very few films ever made from beginning to end in chronological order.

* * *

After *It Happened One Night*, *Strictly Confidential*, and lastly *Mr. Deeds*, Frank Capra is finding that he has a very big reputation to live up to, and his 1937 production, James Hilton's *Lost Horizon*, with Ronald Colman in the lead, will be awaited with considerable interest.

People of the Studios (continued)

U.S.A. (contd.)

Having left M.G.M. eighteen months ago, David O. Selznick is now engaged on a colour film, *A Star is Born*, behind-the-scenes story of Hollywood, with his own production unit. Scheduled are Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* and *The World's Our Oyster*. Actually period novels are his particular oyster: he did *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *Anna Karenina*, *A Tale of Two Cities* and *David Copperfield*, and hopes to do *The Prisoner of Zenda*, with Ronald Colman.

Michael Arlen's *Cavalier of the Streets*, now in production at Pinewood for Paramount distribution, has Carl Harbord and Margaret Vyner in the cast.

Walt Disney is changing from Technicolor to Dunning Color, operated by Caroll Dunning. Dunning is equipping his plant with additional machinery in order to have a three-colour process, as is now used by Technicolor. The first cartoons will be in two colours until this is completed.

Victor Fleming supervised an important sea episode twenty miles away by means of short wave radio telephone the other day, while at the same time he continued directing inside shots. A telephone line was held open between the set and a transmitter on the Santa Monica pier. The microphone was held so that Fleming could hear the dialogue while he was directing Lionel Barrymore and Mickey Rooney.

A self-wiping wind-shield has been invented for use on ocean scenes. A disc of plate-glass about eight inches in diameter rotates before the camera lens by means of a motor. In this way, spray, waves and fog can never obstruct the lens.

R. C. Sheriff has been signed to the adaptation of *Three Comrades*, Remarque's latest novel. He will do most of the work in England. Sheriff came to fame with *Journey's End* and adapted *The Invisible Man* for the screen.

With a year of preparation behind them, the Marx Brothers are now working on their seventh comedy, *A Day at the Races*. The original basis for the picture was turned into a stage act and toured in America, two hundred sure laughs being tabulated in Harpo's notebook. Sam Wood, veteran director of Harold Lloyd comedies, is working with them.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer are running a competition for the best amateur film, with a view to showing it at commercial cinemas. The contest arises from the success of the Pete Smith short *Wanted—A Master*, which was reproduced from a 16 mm. film originally submitted by two amateurs, Gunther von Fritsch and Arthur Ornitz, the first amateur effort ever to reach the professional screen.

Continental

Emil Jannings (nowadays known as "State Actor and Culture-Senator of the Reich") has just joined the administration of Tobis Films. He left for Italy with director Veit

Emil Jannings

Harlan on January 30th to make exteriors at Pompeii for *Der Herrscher* (*The Ruler*), a film of the life of a great industrial leader who with Nazi magnificence makes over his properties to the State on his death.

* * *

Luis Trenker recently returned to Berlin from Italy, where he shot exteriors for *Condottieri*, an Italian historical subject he is making for Tobis. Trenker will play in the film himself. His *Der Kaiser von Kalifornien* (*The Emperor of California*) was awarded the Mussolini Cup, it may be remembered, for the best foreign film of the year at the 1936 Film Art Exhibition at Venice.

* * *

Paula Wessely, under the direction of Carl Frohlich, is at present making *Die Ganzen Grossen Torheiten* (*Enormous Follies*) with Rudolph Forster as leading man.

* * *

There is a spate of versions of novels in production in France at the moment. Marcel Carné, former assistant of Jacques Feyder, wants to adapt Julian Green's *Leviathan* to the screen, but before doing so is to make *His First Offence*, from an English novel. Meanwhile Jean Benoit-Levy, whose *Hélène* was recently seen in this country, is soon to start on *La Mort du Cygne*, from a Paul Morand novel. Two novels of Colette have been bought for filming by a French company. Of similar interest is a version of Oscar Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance*, which Jean Choux is to make with Pierre Blanchard as Lord Illingworth.

La Marseillaise, Jean Renoir's film of the French Revolution, is to be made under the patronage of the Government, and will be financed by public subscription. A million and half of two franc shares are being issued, and everyone who pays his two francs will get a reduction on admission to see the film. Further the Government is giving 50,000 francs towards the estimated cost of two million francs.

This ambitious picture is to start with events a little before the Revolution and will end with Valmy; the storm of the Bastille will be omitted. Renoir is aiming to present the subject through the eyes of typical workmen during the Revolution. Famous authors are collaborating on the script, and the music will be specially composed by Milhaud, Ibert, Auric, Honegger and Kosma.

Renoir recently left for the Vosges to start shooting on his war film, *La Grande Illusion*. Erich von Stroheim and Dita Parlo are the featured players.

* * *

Von Stroheim has just finished a spy film, *Marthe Richard*, directed by Raymond Bernard (who made *Les Croix de Bois*), in which he has the role of a German officer.

* * *

Out of the 65 full-length sound films to be produced in Russia in 1937, ten will be made by the Moscow Studios (Mosfilm), and fifteen by the Leningrad Studios (Lenfilm). Among the films to be produced by the latter are two on the subject of Pushkin, *The Youth of the Poet* and *The Journey to Erzerum*. Lenfilm will produce the last part of the trilogy *The Youth of Maxim*. Special interest attaches to the films *Peter I*, the scenario for which has been written by Alexei Tolstoy; *Pugachev*, a historical film dealing with the events of 1773-74; and *The Far East*, to be produced by G. and S. Vasilyev, the two producers who made *Chapayev*.

* * *

Jean Benoit-Levy's *Hélène* is a convincingly real picture, having an impressive heroine in Madeleine Renaud, and, an actor, in Jean Louis Barrault, who assumes, to the life, the personality he represents. They are members of a vigorous student-community, living amid classrooms and laboratories, where an unmistakably genuine spirit of frankness, freedom, and pluck, typical of most universities, prevails.

The story is mediocre and somewhat prolonged, however, and there are technical faults; but, enhanced by so much vitality, it succeeds where, the German film, *Hélène Willfuhr*, with less regard for truth, failed. It compares favourably, also, with Benoit-Levy's *Itto*, which could not survive the test of healthy interest, and even with *La Maternelle*, although the latter, with its simple, human element, made a wider appeal.

People of the Studios (continued)

Max Ophüls, famous for successful sentimental films such as *Liebelei* a few years ago and the recent Dutch picture shown at the Film Society, *La Tendre Ennemie*, is at present working on *Yoschivara*, a Japanese subject with Sessue Hayakawa, the celebrated star of silent days.

* * *

India has attracted Germany as well as England and America as a film subject: Richard Eichberg left last month to shoot exteriors for two films, *Das Indische Grabmal* and *Der Tiger von Eschnapur*. Thea von Harbou, who was responsible for many of Fritz Lang's scenarios, is responsible for the script of both pictures.

* * *

Dr. Ludwig Berger, famous director of the old German school of cinema, has left the historical novel which he has been busy writing for some time, to take up film work once more. He will direct a Dutch version of Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*.

For two years Berger has not been inside a film studio. His last work was for Paramount in Hollywood. There he directed *Sins of the Fathers*, with Emil Jannings and Ruth Chatterton.

There were plans for a Hollywood version of *Pygmalion* even at that time. Clara Bow was to have been cast as Eliza Dolittle, Berger directing. Unfortunately Shaw and Paramount could not agree and the picture was not made.

In the Dutch *Pygmalion* Berger is determined to keep untouched the translation of the original text.

* * *

The 40-hours work decree is going to be a difficulty to French studios. The two producers' organisations have buried their differences and are now working together as the "Confédération Générale de la Cinématographie" to find a solution to their difficulties.

* * *

An international Federation of Newsreel Cinematographers (Union Internationale de la Presse Filmée) has recently been formed. A.C.T. has affiliated through its Newsreel section and J. C. Gemmell, Newsreel Chairman, is its Committee representative. Other countries to signify their support include Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Poland, Greece and Palestine. The President is M. Henri Piron, President of the Association Belge de la Presse Filmée.

The principal object of the Federation is to safeguard the professional interests of all persons engaged in newsreel work. Questionnaires have been circulated to all supporting bodies to ascertain information on professional facilities, customs regulations and other matters. The replies will form the basis of a Report to be presented to a Conference which will be held in Paris about the middle of June and at which A.C.T. hopes to be represented.

JACQUES FEYDER

Interviewed for W.F.N

"PLEASE," HE SAID to me, "do not treat my words as though they had been spoken by the Archbishop of Canterbury. I do not want them to sound terribly important, or—" he made a gesture in the air—

"Pontifical?" I suggested.

"Exactly."

I was interviewing M. Jacques Feyder, director of *Atlantide*, *Thérèse Raquin*, and internationally famous *Kermesse Héroïque*, and the yet uncompleted *Knight without Armour*, starring Robert Donat and Marlene Dietrich.

M. Feyder is a tall man, a trifle scholarly in appearance, with charming manners, and, like many notable film-directors, an air of distinction. But he possesses a quality which many notable film-directors seem to lack. That is enthusiasm. An honest, thoroughly temperamental enthusiasm which he expresses, according to caprice, in either English or French. At the same time, he has a sense of humour. Not that sort of slightly overrated "sense of humour," which often has to compensate for uninspired creation, but one that evidently permeates his whole philosophy.

"Will you give me your views on the future of British Films?" I asked him. This is the sort of question that is immediately open to every variety of evasion, sarcasm, verbosity, persiflage, or mere plain rudeness. I watched M. Feyder warily. Was he going to show me to the door? I was relieved to see him smiling.

"It's rather a difficult question," he answered.

"It's an important one," I said.

Suddenly, he started to talk. He spoke with the most gratifying conviction I could ever have wished for.

"I think this about English films. It is only lately that the English film industry has been taken seriously. And it is worth being taken seriously." He hit his hand on the table.

"But what impedes it?" he continued. "It is the desire to copy America. The American convention limits the expansion of the English films. Naturally, America had to be the nursemaid for a long time. Its technique is invaluable. But this dependence on a foreign style has eventually stunted its growth.

"The point is this," he emphasised. "America, which is the biggest market for England, doesn't want imitations of its own products. It can do that sort of thing far better. What it wants from England are absolutely English films."

He was thoroughly worked up.

"What pleases everybody?" he asked. "Is it the film that aims to please, that 'studies' markets? No. It is only the purely national film that is completely international. The English film has got to become, in my opinion, an expression of England as only the English can know it or create it. The English earth, the English sky, the English roads, the manners, the traditions, the idiosyncrasies, the *climate*. That is what they want to see in America.

"In short, English films about England made by English people. That is the ideal. No more foreign styles, no more foreign technicians, no more foreign film-craftsmen, no more foreign film-directors." He looked me in the eye. "That means me," he added in English, brightly.

"What do you think of English film-directors?" I asked.

"A funny thing," said M. Feyder, obviously choosing his words, "but it seems to me . . . they really rather despise the cinema . . . a pity. In a way, I admire their loyalty to the stage, to a tradition. But from a film point of view that sort of attitude is extremely disappointing."

"What have been your experiences in making *Knight Without Armour?*"

He shrugged his shoulders. "A certain difficulty with crowds. I am always very careful about crowds, about my background. Those are, of course, tremendously important. In this picture, which deals with Russia, I had a hard time finding types who didn't look as if they spent most of their time in Piccadilly."

M. Feyder plans to make a series of films. French and German versions, in either Paris or Berlin. For Tobis he will commence about June and end in September.

"Will you come back to England?" I asked.

"Perhaps," he answered. "Perhaps." He shook hands. "Remember," he repeated, "I do not speak as the Archbishop."

CORRESPONDENCE

Anniversary Greetings

Sincere congratulations and a long life.
—Alistair Cooke
(*B.B.C. Cinema Critic*)

* * *

Hearty congratulations on first anniversary: heartiest congratulations on "Review of Reviews": so soothing to find such diversity amongst the experts.
—Christian Mellor (London Film Critic, *Sunday Sun*)

* * *

Although we sometimes grumble that you confuse the World with Wardour Street we find you indispensable. Many snappy returns.
—"Frank Evans"
(*Newcastle Evening Chronicle*)

* * *

On first anniversary wish to congratulate W.F.N. on excellent material valuable to all cine fans, technicians and critics, and hope standard set first year will be sustained for many years. Appeal to intelligent readers of W.F.N. is greatest advertisement it could have. The only thing I want to see is more about Scotland, Scots players, directors or technicians, if possible.
—Clyde Irvine (*The Sunday Mail*, Glasgow)

* * *

Amid the labyrinth of celluloid and its crowd of attendant jays, WORLD FILM NEWS is guide, philosopher and friend. The working journalist who ignores it acts foolishly, the film society member who does not follow its focusing on salient points should abandon his Sunday evening pretence, and the comfortable fan, of whom there are millions, in overlooking it on the bookstalls does not know when a shilling is well spent. Now that it is weaned, may it advance in strength and purpose, but always with wit and intelligence, never with that Pecksniffian air which tends to play attendance upon high-souled action.

It may be an unnecessary luxury on an onlooker's part to hand over memoranda. But these things have struck me recently: the misuse of the close-up in musicals, whereby one seems to look at a singer's dentures and gullet with a dentist's vision, and, in film criticism, the failure to convey the fact that a film is a thing seen, that to tell the story or to talk ever so expertly about camera tricks without at least hinting at how the language of images is used in a particular shot or sequence of shots, is to talk round and over the subject and take a plunge ultimately for the gossip columns. These are only two among many points the smiths of WORLD FILM NEWS could lay upon their anvils. Continued watch and war upon the policy of certain newsreels is still needed. The lion, for example, will growl and introduce a maximum of royalty and bayonets and a minimum of the life of the people. And to conclude: the people's cinema should ever be the object of WORLD FILM NEWS bounty and care. To concentrate upon the needs of the societies and experts alone would savour of the ivory tower.
—William Jeffrey (*The Glasgow Herald*)

* * *

I wish every success to WORLD FILM NEWS in its second year. It has become recognised as the organ of the creative side of cinema and carries its responsibility bravely. I hope it will continue to encourage those who make real films and guide those who wish to see them.

I would like to see the paper express its point of view more often in the review section; and in the reviews of foreign films, full production details would be valuable.
—H. Forsyth Hardy (*The Scotsman*)

* * *

An Extra's Complaint

A layman reading Miss Holloway's article, "Kings for a Day," in W.F.N.'s February issue, would assume, and quite rightly, that the average film-extra was some crank or human flotsman—a former doctor, boxer, clergyman, elephant-hunter, war-correspondent, trapper, and so on—attracted by the childish love of dressing up and not because of ambition or the occasional guinea a day. This is emphatically not so. Admittedly there are a good many of these cranks who find their way into the studios, but that is because they find their way almost everywhere else, and they soon find their way out again. But the average film-extra is not at all attracted by the so-called glamour of the studios or by the desire to dress up and be a king or queen or whatever it is for a day. That is just silly. The thing that is of paramount importance to any film-extra worthy of the name is the guinea a day.

Does Miss Holloway know that there are about five thousand film-extras tramping the West End agents day in and day out on the off-chance of a call coming through from the studios? If she does she makes no reference to it. Can she imagine the heartbreak of it all, particularly on an empty stomach? Has Miss Holloway been present at a scramble for jobs in the waiting-room of an agent when a call from a studio has come through at last? If she hasn't then she ought to make it her business to, and she would see at once that it is the guinea a day and not the king for a day that is the incentive. Such desperation comes from the need for food and not for the desire to dress up.

There are over 4,000 film extras registered at the Film Artists' Association, all of whom have had to prove professional stage experience before being admitted. Now can you imagine any actor being content to remain in the crowd and not having hopes of being spotted by a producer and given a part? There are hundreds of young actors and actresses brimful of ambition despite all the setbacks and discouragements. Whether they have any chance of rising beyond the crowd into the celestial regions is another matter; the point is there is lots of ambition in the ranks of the extras, and it is that plus the guinea a day that attracts the younger people.
—L. Gade

* * *

Choice of Films for Societies

I should be very obliged if you could give me some information as to the purpose and *modus operandi* of the Film Society. In the first place it would be of some interest to know whether the object of the society is to amuse or uplift. There seems to be a considerable difference of opinion amongst members (and ex-members) on this. I was recently severly rebuked for entering a film society programme with the same spirit of levity that is apparently quite correct for performances at the same theatre after 6 p.m. on Sundays.

As a corollary of the above question, one may ask on what basis are films selected. Does rarity play any part in the choice? For example does a bad Japanese film stand a better chance of selection than a good American film on the ground that Japanese films are of sufficient interest to be shown apart from merit? Further one would like to know how many people actually see a film before it is chosen; is there a minimum number who must have seen it before selection, or can one man choose the main feature? Some years ago I saw two films in Paris, one German, the other Russian which I suggested for exhibition; to the best of my knowledge they were never considered. I was told privately that a member of the committee has seen them and did not approve of them and therefore the matter was dropped. It would be interesting to know if this is the usual practice or whether this case was exceptional.

Lastly many people have wondered why good American films are not sometimes revived instead of the presentation of some European mediocrity. This applies to full length films and short comedies such as those of Harry Langdon, Keaton, Larry Semon, etc. Is the reason technical or aesthetic?

May I add that the above questions have been asked by numerous people interested in the Cinema and although the answers to some of the them are doubtless common knowledge to many of your readers there is widespread ignorance on most of the points.
—P. A. Gorer

Correspondence (continued)

History of the Movies

With reference to Marie Seton's interesting article on "How Movies Began," she states that the first of "trope and scope" optical toys was Dr. Paris's Traumatrope. Did Dr. Paris's mechanism precede Sir John Herschell's Thaumotrope which he demonstrated in 1826?

Although Daguerre and Niepce preceded Fox Talbot in the "completion" of the invention of photography by about four years, his research and discovery was independent of the two Frenchmen and it is interesting to note that Fox Talbot was apparently unaware of Wedgwood's reproductions of paintings on glass and impressions of natural objects by the agency of light thirty years before. In his complete specification for his patent of 1804, Fox Talbot maintained that he was able to make photographs move and thus reproduce life-like action, but he was forced to abandon this part of his claim.

Regarding Miss Seton's statement that the Hyatt brothers, of New Jersey, discovered celluloid in 1869, Parks, of Birmingham was the first to make celluloid in 1855, which was made in an improved form in 1868 by another Englishman, D. Spill. The Hyatts' valuable contribution in the following year was the *use* of celluloid as a flexible support to negatives.

Since I seem to have embarked upon a crusade on behalf of English inventors, I might mention that the romantic sounding Eadweard Muybridge, of California, U.S.A., was originally Edward Muggeridge, of Kingston, England; and as for the Lumière's first exhibition of films in 1896, Friese Greene demonstrated his moving pictures to the Photographic Society of Great Britain in 1885 and two years later he was giving regular exhibitions in London of what was the first practical patent for films as we know them (No. 10131, June 1889).

Adrian Brunel.

Marie Seton replies to Robb Lawson's article in World Film News (February)

It seems obvious that a 1,000-word article will not contain as detailed information as a treatise taking 30 years to compile. I would suggest that if Mr. Lawson had re-read my last paragraph, he would have seen that my article surveyed the history of the cinema from a commercial rather than a scientific angle. A short history of flying would report the experiments of da Vinci and Handley Page in preference to repeating anecdotes of Siberian peasants constructing feather wings for themselves. I, therefore, selected those people and dates which advanced the film upon its commercial route. My authorities were as follows:—*Histoire du Cinématographe* by G. Michel Coissac, *Motion Picture Cameraman* by Lutz; and an article, *The Film as a Recording Medium*, by Stanley W. Bowler, appearing in the 1936 British Journal Photographic Almanac. These sources of information are available to all.

Mr. Lawson, it appears, bases his contentions upon material obtained from an unpublished work which has not been available for critical examination.

Regarding the dates of the Lumière demonstrations, '96 is a misprint: It should read '95. I chose this date, 22nd March, 1895, as the day on which the Lumière experiments were transformed into an investment capable of producing tangible returns; for it was demonstrated to the Society for the Encouragement of National Industry at 42, rue de Rennes, Paris.

Dr. Paris commercialised the Traumatoscope.

There are a number of towns called Bristol in the U.S.A.

The experiments of Alexander Parkes did not emerge from the experimental stage; the Hyatt's did.

Goodwin's patents were sold to the Ansco Company who finally won a lawsuit against Eastman Kodak; but it still remains a fact that it was Eastman who produced a commercial celluloid cinematographic film.

In the matter of pioneer work, in photography and cinematography, most impartial authorities seem strangely biased in favour either of their own theories, or their own countrymen.

It is interesting to note then that Dr. C. E. K. Mees (American, Eastman Kodak), gives credit to Neipce and Daguerre (French) for practical photography in 1839 (Niepce, senior, died, however, in 1833), but points out that it is to Fox Talbot's (English) first work in 1835, and then subsequent to that, that the true photographic negative and positive processes should be attributed. Robert W. Paul (English) gives credit to Louis Lumière (French) for the fact that although they both showed moving pictures—a true paying public cinematograph performance—in London on the same day, Lumière's pictures were the steadier of the two.

Marie Seton.

* * *

Indian Films—Moslem reply

In the December issue of World Film News Ram. L. Gogtay, editor of an Indian film paper, gave a survey of the film in India and in his article accused the Mohammedans of apathy as far as film production is concerned. In describing their attitude he cited a case of the showing of an historical play when Mohammedans took such deep offence at the presentation that they rushed "with butchers' knives on the stage."

Comments on this article have been received from Sheikh Iftekhar Rasool who has been an actor and producer of Indian films and who at one time worked in England.

He says:

"Until recently most of the films produced by the so-called literate producers were sometimes scandalously immoral and parents would not permit even their college-going sons to go to the pictures.

"In order to understand the Mohammedan attitude to films one must remember the part that religion plays in their lives. Even to-day you will not find a Moslem running a wine shop, nor do you find him financing film ventures. These things are considered immoral.

"Now the situation regarding films has changed, for some of the better-class companies have been producing films of educational value and Mohammedans are beginning to consider the industry with more favour. To-day they are producing pictures which have proved both popular and profitable. The financiers and a few directors may be Hindus but the majority of the story writers, actors and actresses are Moslems.

"It must be remembered that the film industry in India is of recent growth. It is a major industry in which 11 crores of rupees have been invested and which gives employment to 25,000 people.

Sheikh Iftekhar Rasool.

"Among the most serious drawbacks of the industry is lack of finance. In India there is not a single instance of any bank having financed a producer even at an abnormal rate of interest.

"The progress of any big industry largely depends on the support and encouragement received from the Government and the public. Although the industry in India has shown progress in the past few years it is still hampered by several factors which are like a dead weight on the industry.

"Among the chief obstacles to growth are mass illiteracy and language difficulties.

"Government assistance on the matters of import duty, censorship and foreign competition has been asked in a number of suggestions made at the recent All-India Motion Picture Convention."

Dealing with the "Butchers' knives" incident reported by Ram Gogtay, Rasool writes: "To a Moslem his King is the shadow of God on Earth. The play to which objection was taken depicted the alleged love of Zebunnisa, daughter of one of the mightiest Moghul Emperors, for Sivja, a petty Manratte hill chieftain. To Moslems this was an insult.

"Butchers' knives had an instantaneous effect, for the Government intervened and the producers were compelled to transform the role of Zebunnisa into a Hindu princess."

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Actors don't Count

says Fritz Kortner, star of "ABDUL THE DAMNED"

AROUND THE HUGE horse-shoe table of the Disarmament Conference, diplomats (extras) sat and lolled, reading, sleeping, gossiping.

In the adjoining lobby, Sinclair Hill cheerfully decided on "Take 14."

Charles Farrell chewed gum—slewed his hat a little more to one side. Margaret Vyner put a new pair of lips (synthetic) on her own.

Round the waste spaces of the studio Fritz Kortner paced with an introspective air. No one took much notice of him.

Some stars surround themselves with glamour. They cannot even refurbish their make-up, or glance over the script without an attendant group of yes-men and an aura of self-importance. They dare not talk without a sidelong look at their press agent whose sinister influence dominates each waking moment, which accounts possibly for the fact that so many stars marry their managers.

But Fritz Kortner does not believe in glamour. He does not believe in publicity. And, in his own words—words that only an actor as good as he would have dared to use, "the actor doesn't count."

"Believe me, my friend," he told me earnestly, "it is the story that counts. Not what you call the plot. But the story in its final version—the final shooting script, that is what makes a picture. Actors don't count."

Mr. Kortner paused. It is a habit of his. Keen-witted, he takes time before he speaks. He says something and then stops. You ask him a question. There is a Macready pause. Mr. Kortner weighs up the matter, trivial or important. Then, suddenly, he shoots out his lower lip and speaks in that fascinating accent which he deplores.

"My little girl," he tells you proudly, "speaks English with no accent at all."

"So it's the story that is all important, not the director?" I asked.

Pause, lips shoot out.

"The Director—yes. Very important, too. But he is partly responsible for the last shooting script, the story.

"The writer's share is not so great. The actor——" he shrugged.

"Listen, my friend, a good director can make a second-rate actor appear first-rate. But a bad director will spoil a great performance.

"Do you think every Hollywood star is really so magnificent?" Kortner wagged his head. "It's the director who gives the illusion of great acting.

"And the American scripts—ah, my friend, they are so different from the English ones.

FRITZ KORTNER—Recent films have included *Abdul the Damned* and *The Crouching Beast*. First made his name in the famous German production of *The Brothers Karamazov* with Anna Sten, in which he played Dmitri. Has a strong preference for psychological parts of this kind, but finds English producers unsympathetic.

Take the same story—if you like, the same 'plot'—and put an English and an American shooting script side by side, and you would see the difference."

British actors, Hollywood scripts and Continental directors, that is Mr. Kortner's recipe for success in "British" films.

"You have some wonderful artists in Britain," he told me, "the older actors and actresses in particular." He agreed with me that we lacked with a few exceptions, good juveniles of both sexes.

But Mr. Kortner doesn't crab his fellow craftsmen. And he told me with an unmistakable sincerity of his admiration for Sinclair Hill's work.

"Mr. Hill senses at once when a line or a situation is wrong. You see, the part and the actor must meet, interlock. There must be no gap, no breathing space between the actor and the character he is playing. He must feel it. Mr. Hill always knows when the actor and the part don't meet."

"And there you are," a smile flashed across his face as he spread his hands, "the story, final version. All important, eh!

"The same on the stage. Take the classics—Shakespeare. I failed as Macbeth."

I laughed deprecatingly, "What do you mean, failed?"

"I failed. I was no good. And after all, I am an actor. I can give a performance whether a part suits me or not. But have you ever heard of a great Macbeth?"

Pause, then the lower lip shot out again. "No. A great Hamlet, a great Shylock, a great Rosalind, a great Lear, if you like. But Macbeth? No."

"Why?" Another pause, then slowly. "Because there is something wrong with the story."

"With the—shooting script?"

Kortner grinned. "With the story—what *I* mean by the story," he answered.

"So you don't believe in the star system?"

"No!" He rapped out the monosyllable sharply. "I believe in a good picture, and——" he tapped me with his forefinger, "you can have a picture which will appeal to all classes, highbrow and lowbrow, but only if the story is good."

I protested. "Some of the stories of the best films are so bad," I said.

Kortner frowned. "We are talking at cross purposes," he said. "What is the story? The final version."

I began to see what he meant.

"So well-treated Garvice is better than badly treated Strindberg?" I suggested.

Kortner smiled. "If you like."

As we strolled across to the comfortable Club restaurant at Pinewood, I asked Kortner his plans. He may go on the stage here. He is, of course well known on the Continent for stage as well as film work. Silent pictures, too.

"But I'm not so old as all that," he said, pointing to the grey hair he assumes for *Midnight Special*. "That's make-up."

"I thought you were a veteran," I said.

Kortner laughed. "Twenty-three years on the stage—perhaps I am. I'm forty," he said.

"Do you want to go to Hollywood?" I asked.

He considered this. "Yes," he said, after a moment, with decision. "Yes, I would like to go."

"For the—er—stories?"

Fritz Kortner smiled as he studied the menu with Viennese appreciation for good food.

"All right," I apologised, "we won't talk shop any more."

Viennese Kortner shrugged. "Let us talk shop, once more, anyway," he said. "Please remember, when you write your article, first, the story—then, the director—and then—" long pause——and Mr. Kortner made it—"the actor."

DENIS MYERS.

Kemal Ataturk Patron of Cinema

But high purposes did not last long, Champagne Parties and plenty of bed and bath scenes are Turkey's delight.

A Kemalist arrested by theSultan's troops

From "A Nation Awakes"

BEFORE the advent of Kemal Ataturk every important industry in Turkey was in the hands of foreigners who had obtained by fair means or foul concessions from the tottering "Sick Man of Europe." The introduction of films to Turkey was a speculation on the part of the French and they opened the first cinema in 1903 on the Golden Horn. Immediately this strange Western novelty attracted enormous crowds; but it was an audience which very quickly formed definite opinions of its own. The Turks who went to the cinema would not suffer instructional films and they were strongly prejudiced against religious subjects. The life of Moses was banned, and a theatre in Smyrna was closed for three days because the management was rash enough to show an Arab wedding.

Highbrows and Urchins

The products of Hollywood became exceedingly popular, with the result that even to-day there exists a cut-throat competition between the American production companies who succeed in filling a large number of Turkish cinemas with their old films. In 1933 *The Thief of Bagdad* was still drawing large houses; while, across the road, *Drei Groschen Oper* was playing to a few highbrow Turkish ladies and a great many street urchins.

The most successful Turks in the film business were nine brothers, the first part of whose unpronounceable name is Ipek. At one time or another they had represented most of the big American companies. When nationalism became a popular, if not a necessary, creed, the brothers Ipek voiced their views and gained the ear of Kemal Ataturk, then Kemal Pasha, or Ghazi—the Conqueror. That was in 1930. They received a subsidy from Kemal and built the first studio in the Near East which now bears the name of Ipek. The studio, though small, is excellently equipped, and employs a number of German sound technicians.

A Nation Awakes

Before the idea of Turkish national films had materialised, several Turks had gone abroad to study cinemas. Some went to Hollywood as critics; while one, Ertogrül Mühsin, went to work first in a Paris studio, later in Berlin, and finally in Moscow. Mühsin felt that the experiments of Eisenstein and Pudovkin had great possibilities; Kemel Pasha agreed with him, and when the Ipek studio was finished, Ertogrül Mühsin proved to be the first and most successful director.

Since the Turkish cinema owed its life to Kemal, the work of Kemal in the military and political field was its first concern. Although Kemal does not appear in person in the film *A Nation Awakes*, the awakening of the nation is clearly due to his overthrow of the Sultan and the defeat of the British. This historical-educational-propaganda film is by no means a crude glorification of a nationalist dictator. It is an interesting, if somewhat incomplete, picture of a revolution of political and psychological ideas. It is a Turkish *End of St. Petersburg* minus the genius of Pudovkin. The vitality in this picture, which because of its anti-British point of view will not be sent to England, suggested that Turkey could contribute something to the cinema in general. Unfortunately, Kemal has not been able to change the Turks' dislike for instructional films. *A Nation Awakes* was thus the one and only picture of its kind.

After *A Nation Awakes* the whole policy of the Ipek Film Company changed. It was going to educate, but in a different way—through the frothiest comedies and operettas. The company decided to teach the Turks in the interior the importance of slim bathing belles, well-dressed young women and the charms of fair men (many Turks are as fair as Scandinavians). In order to do this Mühsin made three light entertainments complete with beauty choruses, champagne parties and plenty of bed and bath scenes. They are *If My Wife should Cheat Me*, in which there is a funny man in a panama hat and an excellent slow-motion sequence of diving; *My Darling Hairdresser*, which contains everything that the title implies, and *As God is One my Word is One*, where the heroine spends a great deal of time in her cami-knickers while the hero falls asleep in the bath. All these three films are quite amusing and adequately directed.

Best of both worlds ?

But Mühsin does not wish to make light comedies; his interest lies in the Turkish peasant. In 1935 he formed a company of his own and made a film, *A Woman from the Mountains*, which from the stills is interesting in spite of a suggestion that it strives after the picturesque rather than authentic documentary material. This film is probably a compromise between *A Nation Awakes* and the Hollywoodised entertainments of the fashionable rather than educational type.

by Marie Seton

'Westerns' from the Empire?

By Ida McAulay

(W.F.N.'s Australian Correspondent)

Australia's new film policy calls for the production of a number of outdoor pictures, among which will be "bush" subjects. Arrangements have already been made for exhibition in England.

SINCE my last article was written Stuart Doyle, managing director of Cinesound Ltd., has announced his company's future policy, which is based largely upon the result of reports brought back by him after his recent visit to England and America.

In spite of the opinion of his directors that quota legislation in Australia has failed to achieve its purpose, this company intends to embark upon a system of intensive and continuous production.

The Australian Quota Act came into effect in July 1936. This ensures that for 1936 at least 4 per cent of the film footage shown by an exhibitor must be Australian. The Quota Bill also provides that the percentage of Australian films shall be increased each year for five years until 12 per cent is reached. This means that about sixty Australian pictures of more than five thousand feet will have to be produced each year if the quota is to be reached. A few films that were made in Australia in 1935 have been included in the quota which means that the expansion of production need not exceed the capacity of present studios to make good films, so that the evil known as the "quota quickie" should not make its appearance in Australia.

It is not quite clear why the directors of Cinesound consider the quota legislation already to be a failure, but they have made the following statement, that they "feel the responsibility of Cinesound, as the pioneer organisation to continue production of Australian pictures on a permanent basis, quite independent of quota. Cinesound is determined to continue rather than see this great national enterprise fail."

In pursuance of this policy the company intends to produce between five and six feature productions annually for Australian and world distribution, and next year the company intends to introduce a second unit for the production of outdoor pictures. Cinesound Reviews will be produced annually, and items of international interest will be taken by the company under contract with the Pathé Gazette of London, the UFA Film Trust in Germany, Pathé Frères in Paris, and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in the United States. Cinesound also hopes to become the training ground of actors and actresses of world standing, and will, from time to time, arrange for their own stars to appear in films made overseas. When necessary this company will import stars for special roles, and for that purpose an organisation has been set up in Hollywood and London.

Stuart Doyle has established a definite market in England for Cinesound Pictures, and it is expected that 40 per cent of production costs will be returned from that country.

Cinesound's 1936–37 schedule of production includes:

Orphan of the Wilderness, with an all-Australian cast, directed by Ken Hall, and featuring "Chut," the boxing kangaroo. This picture was completed and released at Christmas in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

It Isn't Done, a modern comedy-romance, directed by Ken Hall, partly produced in England, and partly in Sydney. The cast of this play includes Shirley Ann Richards, a young Australian actress.

Tall Timber, from an original screen play by Captain Frank Hurley, which started production on January 1st, for release at Easter.

Rolf Bolderwood's *Robbery Under Arms*, with an imported star.

Pearl of Great Price, a story of the pearling industry.

And *Yellow Sands*, a story of Australian sport and manhood.

The company will continue producing its pictures of Australian industries, activities and scenery which has been formerly, and will continue to be the work of Captain Frank Hurley and his unit.

Orphan of the Wilderness has been adapted for the screen from Dorothy Cotterell's story of the same name. This authoress manages to put into her books some of that elusive fascination and beauty that Australians sometimes speak of as "the spirit of the bush."

"Chut," Kangaroo Star, Australia's Rin-Tin-Tin

LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 1200 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport, Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston.
Synod Hall ...	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maidenhead.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Stratford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation ...	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork.
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth.
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz	Doncaster.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.

LEADING COUNSEL

Tolstoy on the Cinema

ALTHOUGH TOLSTOY'S "ANNA KARENINA" is one of the four or five novels that have been made into moving pictures more often than any others, the sage of Yasnaya Polyana never had to go through the torture that is scenario writing in Hollywood. But Leo Tolstoy had his own troubles with the movies, nevertheless.

All through the last years of his life, when his writings and philosophy were revered the world over, Tolstoy was bothered by an unceasing flow of visitors, who questioned him on all sorts of things, from literature to vegetarianism. And, on the eve of his eightieth birthday, in August, 1908, the motion picture cameramen flocked into his home for a few historic shots.

Said Tolstoy on that occasion to his friend, I. Teneromo, and the visitors: "You will see that this little clicking contraption with the revolving handle will make a revolution in our life—in the life of writers. It is a direct attack on the old method of literary art. We shall have to adapt ourselves to the shadowy screen and to the cold machine. A new form of writing will be necessary. I have thought of that and I can feel what is coming.

"But I rather like it. This swift change of scene, this blending of emotion and experience—it is much better than the heavy, long drawn-out kind of writing to which we are accustomed. It is closer to life. In life, too, changes and transitions flash by before our eyes, and emotions of the soul are like a hurricane. The cinema has divined the mystery of motion. And that is greatness.

"When I was writing 'The Living Corpse,' I tore my hair and chewed my fingers because I could not give enough scenes, enough pictures, because I could not pass rapidly enough from one event to another. The accursed stage was like a halter choking the throat of the dramatist; and I had to cut the life and swing of the work according to the dimensions and requirements of the stage. I remember when I was told that some clever person had devised a scheme for a revolving stage, on which a number of scenes could be prepared in advance. I rejoiced like a child, and allowed myself to write ten scenes into my play. Even then I was afraid the play would be killed.

"But the films! They are wonderful! Drr! and a scene is ready! Drr! and we have another! We have the sea, the coast, the city, the palace—and in the palace there is tragedy (there is always tragedy in palaces, as we see in Shakespeare).

"I am seriously thinking of writing a play for the screen. I have a subject for it. It is a terrible and bloody theme. I am not afraid of bloody themes. Take Homer or the Bible, for instance. How many bloodthirsty passages there are in them—murders, wars. And yet these are the sacred books, and they ennoble and uplift the people. It is not the subject itself that is so terrible. It is the propagation of bloodshed, and the justification for it, that is really terrible! Some friends of mine returned from Kursk recently and told me a shocking incident. It is a story for the films. You couldn't write it in fiction or for the stage. But on the screen it would be good. Listen—it may turn out to be a powerful thing."

And Leo Tolstoy related the story in detail. He was deeply agitated as he spoke. But he never developed the theme in writing. Tolstoy was always like that. When he was inspired by a story he had been thinking of, he would become excited by its possibilities. If someone happened to be near by, he would unfold the plot in all its details. Then he would forget all about it. Once the gestation was over and his brain-child born, Tolstoy would seldom bother to write about it.

—David Bernstein, *New York Sunday Times*

An Explosive Formula

LOCALE HAS BECOME a prime factor in screen drama: a basic ingredient of the production formula. Once a Greek chorus found it possible to evoke heroic drama on bare platforms, and even the Elizabethan stage permitted draperies to lapse when the scene shifted from palace to hovel, market place to tomb.

Not so to-day. There have been pictures based on Mars, action in submarines, hotel lobbies, tenement roofs, sea liners, the lower Nile, street corners, the Amazon jungle, international boundary lines, speakeasies, opera stages, airplanes, railroad trains, laboratories, and even the groves of heaven and the gates of doom. There have been earthquakes at Pompeii and San Francisco. Audiences have seen hills of Golgotha, shores of Galilee, courts of emperors and halls of kings, international conferences, lynchings right on the home grounds. They have seen football scenes, base-ball crises, ski slopes, circus tents and burlesque stagedoors. And in these places they have witnessed drama, tragedy, comedy, epics, farces, satires and grotesques.

The emphasis on locale has given literary persons a dangerous and explosive dramatic formula. All they need to do is either to duplicate the newsreel characteristics of a well-known event or catastrophe or to take a group of ordinary abstractions, dress them as players, and let the effects of a novel setting precipitate novel transmutations. The camera can be relied upon to create the illusion of reality in the setting which will reflect a glow of authenticity on the action itself, no matter how improbable.

This sort of motion picture is a descendant on the wrong side of the cover of the literary tradition of Jules Verne. It reached its highest form in the collected works of H. G. Wells, and it has been vulgarised in other media in which a whole generation of children is being nurtured on the super-scientific marvels which a virtuous man is permitted to employ in his grappling with a monstrous evil.

The effect has been unfortunate. Dramatic taste has succumbed before an appetite for the eccentric and weird; the moral and psychological impact of sheer story is sacrificed for the retailing of believe-it-or-not facts. Facts which are so far from the experience of the beholder partake more of the nature of fantasy than of truth. The conclusion in the audience mind must necessarily follow that unusual and important things take place only in unusual and notable circumstances. It was not for this that Chekov laboured to produce starkest human tragedy from humblest facts.

—*New York Herald Tribune*

Hollywood's Betrayal of America

IT IS IRONIC and tragic, too, that we cannot praise Hollywood for its courage without mocking it for its cowardice. *Black Legion*, is one of the most courageous, forthright and bitter editorials the screen has written. Its indictment of the hooded organisation which terrorized the Mid-west in 1935–36 is relentlessly pursued. It shows us brutality, stupidity and hypocrisy masquerading under the cloak of patriotism. It takes facts and gives them a fictional veneer without ever concealing their reality. It fills us with horror and indignation and shame for what has been done in this land of liberty, justice and equality.

And then we are reminded: Hollywood halted production of *It Can't Happen Here* because Italy and Germany would have taken offense at its anti-Fascist message; it destroyed the negative of *The Devil is a Woman* because of a Spanish protest about its disrespectful treatment of Spain's Civil Guard; it omitted all mention of the War of 1812 in *Lloyds of London* rather than affront our British cousins; it regretfully abandoned plans for a film of *Paths of Glory* upon learning that France would prefer to have that incident of the World War forgotten; it shelved *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* in Turkey's interest; it —but there's no need to cite more cases. The evidence should be sufficient.

It leads inexorably to the conclusion that Hollywood may tread safely upon no one's toes but our own. From *Ramona* and *Sutter's Gold* and *Robin Hood of El Dorado* to *Fury* and *Black Legion* there runs a common vein: self-censure. We, as a nation, are assumed to be efficiently broad-minded to stand before the screen's mirrored image of ourself and observe, dispassionately or otherwise, that we cheated the Mexicans in California, robbed the Indians in the West, stirred a witch's brew of lynch mobs in the South and Mid-west, spawned craven gangsters in the East, threw our cities to the mercy of political leeches and hatched a corrupt bar, a venal judiciary and a depraved penal system—among other things. It is a pretty picture Hollywood has painted for all the world to see, and we may well be proud of it.

That is written in all seriousness, for it should be part of a nation's character, as it is an individual's, to be broad enough to stand the truth, however unpleasant. Hollywood being a practical business man, must play Europe's game, which, at the moment, seems to have been borrowed from the ostrich—all waving plumes and colour on the surface and its ugly little head beneath. We, a hardy breed, will continue—the cinema and Mr. Hays willing—to suffer these repeated shocks to our national ego, staggering occasionally under a body blow, recovering if the film's conclusion bids us hope that the evil has been remedied, but never—let us pray—driving Hollywood headlong into its economic cowardice by insisting that even the pinfeathers of the American eagle be gilded.

—Frank S. Nugent,
New York Sunday Times

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

THE PLAINSMAN. (Cecil B. de Mille—Paramount.)

Gary Cooper, Jean Arthur.

This film is on the grand and unashamed scale. Indians are wanted and thousands of Indians are there, the frontier is being devastated and devastated it is, ambushes must play their part and ambushes do, and then there is Mr. Gary Cooper, perpetually "on the draw" and wearing that slow smile and that slouch hat which become him so well. Mr. Cooper is sardonic, cynical, and immensely impressive, whether he is being tortured by Indians, leading forlorn hopes, or pretending that he does not love Calamity Jane (Miss Jean Arthur), an able young woman with a stock-whip. If the West in its pioneer days is to be opened up again, Mr. Cooper and Miss Arthur, with the lavish assistance of Mr. Cecil de Mille, are certainly the people to do it.

—*The Times*

That Cecil B. de Mille directed this film still seems incredible. It is bright, zippy, humorous and human, even in the Capra tradition, and contains no bathing beauties. Gary Cooper again distinguishes himself, making a believable and indigenous character out of the two-gun badman, Wild Bill Hickcock. Next in honours is Jean Arthur, doing a swell knockabout job as Calamity Jane. The fusion of the Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill, and Custer's Last Stand legends make a nice piece of Americana. Notable, too, is the munitions angle, showing how the Indians got guns with which to kill the white settlers. And credit the folk-touch given to Wild Bill, by having him a teller of such whoppers as the one about the fish that drowned. —Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

Gary Cooper and Jean Arthur in Cecil B. Mille's "The Plainsman"

Review of the Month

CAMILLE. (George Cukor — Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Greta Garbo, Robert Taylor, Lionel Barrymore.

Having passed its fiftieth anniversary, *Camille* is less a play than an institution. Just as *Hamlet* is the measure of the great actor, so has Dumas fils' classic become the ultimate test of the dramatic actress. Greta Garbo's performance is in the finest tradition: eloquent, tragic, yet restrained. She is as incomparable in the rôle as legend tells us that Bernhardt was. Through the perfect artistry of her portrayal, a hackneyed theme is made new again, poignantly sad, hauntingly lovely.

George Cukor, the classicist of the Metro studios, has retained the full flavour of the period—France in the middle of the last century—without drenching his film with the cloying scent of a hothouse. *Camille*, under his benign handling and the understanding adaptation by Zoe Akins, Frances Marion and James Hilton, is not the reverentially treated museum piece we half expected to see. Its speech has been modernised, but not jarringly; its characters, beneath the frills and ruffles of the Fifties, have the contemporary point of view; its tragedy is still compelling, for the Lady of the Camellias must eternally be a tragic figure.

Miss Garbo has interpreted Marguerite Gautier with the subtlety that has earned for her the title, "first lady of the screen." Even as the impish demi-mondaine of the early sequences, she has managed to convey the impression of maturity, of a certain etherealism and spiritual integrity which raise her above her surroundings and mark her as one apart. Her love for Armand, dictating her flight from Paris and the protection of the Baron de Varville, becomes, then, less a process of reformation and regeneration than it is the natural realisation of her true character; less a change of life than a discovery of life.

To appreciate her complete command of the rôle, one need only study her approach to the key scenes of the drama. Where the less sentient Camille bides her time until the moment comes for her to tear her passions and the scenery to tatters, Garbo waits and then understates. It is her dignity that gives strength to her scene with M. Duval when he asks her to give up his son. It is because her emotions do not slip their leash—when you feel that any second they might—that saves her parting scene with Armand from being a cliché of renunciation. And, above all, it is her performance in the death scene—so simply, delicately and movingly played—which convinces me that *Camille* is Garbo's best performance.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

The Plainsman (contd.)

Mr. Cecil B. de Mille: there has always been a touch of genius as well as absurdity in this warm-hearted sentimental salvationist. *The Crusades*, *The Ten Commandments* were comic and naïve, but no director since Griffith has handled crowds so convincingly. Now—startlingly—Mr. de Mille seems to have grown up. *The Plainsman* is certainly the finest Western since *The Virginian:* perhaps it is the finest Western in the history of the film. Indeed one might wonder whether Mr. de Mille's name had been taken in vain if it were not for the magnificent handling of the extras in the big sets. A few great spectacular moments in the history of the film remain as a permanent encouragement to those who believe that an art may yet emerge from a popular industry: the long shots of the Battle of Bull Run in *The Birth of a Nation*, the French attack in *All Quiet*. Some of the scenes in *The Plainsman* belong to that order.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

Critical Summary.

Excellently received, and considered by more than one critic to be de Mille's best. Trade reviews reveal an expectation for this film to prove something of a box-office record-breaker.

THE GREAT BARRIER. (Milton Rosmer—Gaumont-British.)

Richard Arlen, Lilli Palmer, Antoinette Cellier, Barry Mackay.

This film has for its background the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and this fact alone would arouse interest, for the British studios have always shown themselves strangely reluctant to make full-length films on themes of reality. With *The Great Barrier* a start has been made. It cannot be called more than a start, for the makers, faced with a pioneering subject, seem to have been determined to include everything, or nearly everything, that has ever been in pioneering pictures. This necessitates a story not entirely at one with the theme of the building of the railway. The personal exploits of a young gambler, who makes good, and his best friend, who goes to the bad, are of the type familiar in pioneer pictures. We could accordingly dispense with some of them in favour of learning how the railway was taken over the pass. But if the running of the railway seems remarkably haphazard—so haphazard that this part of the film has little reality—*The Great Barrier* does offer in its place a film full of action. Avalanches, fights, accidents follow in quick succession. Indians are brought in to shoot rapids, and there is enough riding for any "Western."

—R. H., *The Manchester Guardian*

The Great Barrier tells of the pioneers who plotted, planned, and constructed the C.P.R.—that straight-as-a-gunshot railroad that straddles the Canadian Rockies so proudly; yet with a pride that came after many falls. Swamps that sucked and swallowed men, mechanism, engines in their mammoth entirety; dynamite-charges that coughed up fragments of hurtled rock and released avalanche after avalanche, hideously

W.F.N. SELECTION

Camille * *
The Plainsman * *
The Great Barrier *
Beloved Enemy *
Craig's Wife *
Pathé Newsreel Madrid * *

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

Camille
The Plainsman
The Great Barrier
Beloved Enemy
The Plough and the Stars
Craig's Wife
Sensation
O.H.M.S.
Pathé Newsreel Madrid
Dreaming Lips
Cain and Mabel
Ernte
Regine
Mazurka
Son of Mongolia

indiscriminate, on those beneath . . . Rocks, tall and rearing, whose faces wore the granite half-smile of death; the work that wearied men, the cold that cut them, the heat that hurt. Acting is as I would have it: quiet, disarmingly reticent, yet hammering home each point with the ringing blows of authenticity. To Richard Arlen and Barry Mackay, two card-sharpers who purged their souls of a lust for gambling by hard labour on the railroad-track; to Lilli Palmer, temptress, and Roy Emerton, overseer, who led them to glory, I fling a quantity of laurels. To Milton Rosmer, for his direction, applause that will, I hope, re-echo to the most distant cranny of the Empire. —Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

Critical Summary.

Handicapped on its release in London by inevitable comparison with "The Plainsman." Press reviews varied from very enthusiastic to more qualified praise, but subject matter universally applauded. Considered excellent entertainment by the trade.

BELOVED ENEMY. (H. C. Potter—United Artists.)
Merle Oberon, Brian Aherne.

Merle Oberon and Brian Aherne act with such quiet, unrestrained, yet forceful sincerity in *Beloved Enemy* that this picture is one of the most emotionally effective I have seen for a long time. The story is about the trouble in Ireland in 1921, and, broadly, without submitting too much to the handicap of historical fact, it is based on the life and death of Michael Collins. Such a theme, underlining, as it does, the criminal futility of such antagonisms, cannot fail in its dramatic appeal, even if it rouses no deeper sense of resentment. In this case bloodshed and hatred provide a background for one of the most impressive fictional romances the screen has given us. —Richard Haestier, *The Star*

No one who recalls the pitiful Irish tragedy of 1921–22 can fail to be reminded of gallant, breezy Michael Collins when seeing this splendid picture. Heavily charged with grim tragedy, the theme's relief is mainly the gaiety shown whenever possible by Brian Aherne, whose magnificent rendering of the handsome, dashing rebel is convincingly dramatic, full of charm and manliness, but astonishingly free from theatricality. It seems to me that it will rank among the best performances of the year, whatever else may come along. —P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

Critical Summary.

The critics are agreed that after "These Three," "Dodsworth" and "Come and Get It," Sam Goldwyn has done it again and produced another intelligent and moving production. The acting of Merle Oberon and Brian Aherne is generally considered admirable. The trade are well satisfied.

THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS. (John Ford—RKO Radio.)
Barbara Stanwyck, Preston Foster, Bonita Granville, Una O'Connor.

Men must fight and women must keen is the theme of Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*, done into films by Radio through the direction of John Ford, who set the current Irish fashion with *The Informer*. Of all the "trouble" films, this is probably the truest to life as it was lived and lost in those times. The main characters live in Dublin tenement houses, and, except two, they brawl in public-houses, loot the shops, boast in liquor and are spitefully sober and yet, somehow, they are all touched with the fire of patriotism. The siege of the Post Office, the sniping from the roofs, the looting of the shops are bits of realism.

—Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

This is not by any means another *The Informer* . . . It is a troubled and rather troublesome film about the Irish Trouble, curiously rent in texture between the strong, soft playing of the native Irish players, and the nasal melodramatics of Hollywood. There are moments, and lovely ones, when the Irish voices put a spell on the picture—one meeting of the rebels in particular, is a scene I shall long remember with pleasure. But before you can say Sinn Fein they are over and done with, and there'll be Miss Una O'Connor up to her cracker-jack antics, and Mr. Preston Foster with his Hollywood blarney, and Miss Barbara Stanwyck keening for the souls who have "gawn." —C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

The afterglow of the super qualities of this film as a whole bids me to cheer lustily and to say that if RKO-Radio Pictures produce nothing else this season, the finely wrought direction, meltingly beautiful acting and stirring drama of *The Plough and the Stars* would still make this cinema year distinguished. Basically, the theme of the play is the Easter Week Rebellion and its abortive and tragic failure, with emphasis on the heroism, cowardice, fanaticism and sentimentality of a weird group of characters who inhabit a squalid Dublin tenement. *The Plough and the Stars* is a grim and scorching photo-play, indignant, powerful indictment of armed force as well as finely written, shewdly characterised and intense entertainment. On the whole the acting is as beautiful as the film. But it is Barry Fitzgerald, a great little comic with much of the wistfulness that is Chaplin, who plays Fluther, who is the real star of the film. His performance is magnificent.

—William Boehnel, *The New York World Telegram*

Roy Emerton in G.B.'s new film "The Great Barrier"

CRAIG'S WIFE. (Dorothy Arzner—Columbia.)
Rosalind Russell, John Boles, Billie Burke, Dorothy Wilson.

A thing which gets my critical goat is the insane habit the English have of disliking a play when it is a play and liking it when it is turned into a film. *Craig's Wife* was a dismal failure when it was produced over here a few years ago, when, incidentally, it was a more probable piece of work than is the present film. Readers will remember how a woman is so house-proud that she sacrifices everything, including husband and friends, to her love for her chairs and tables. But in the case of the film Mrs. Craig is not house-proud; she is palace-proud, and, as the friend who was with me remarked, there would be some sense in sticking to a palace like that, as against so dull a husband as Mr. John Boles makes of Craig. You know the kind of place—Cumberland-like vestibules lead through Grosvenor-like corridors to Dorchester-like saloons. Miss Rosalind Russell's present performance is so good that it suggests I have never before seen her when she was not wildly miscast. She has always been seen as an intensely genteel young Englishwoman loving an American hero rather against her own convictions and principles. In *Craig's Wife* she has to cling to a wainscot and not a waistcoat, and she does it with immeasurably greater success. Nevertheless, the best performance in this film seems to me to be that of Miss Dorothy Wilson as Mrs. Craig's niece. She is a born actress. I put my finger on her now and declare that she is marked for stardom. And she is, thank Heaven, not a "lovely." —James Agate, *The Tatler*

SENSATION. (Brian Desmond Hurst—Associated British Pictures.)
John Lodge, Francis Lister, Joan Marion, Diana Churchill, Athene Seyler.

If Elstree desired to prove that it can produce a crime film as slickly as the best of them from Hollywood, it has achieved its purpose in *Sensation*. And if that were all, I would salute director Brian Desmond Hurst and pass on, but it is not. This is a film in which crime reporters are given a macabre affinity with the body-snatchers of old, while the police are—by contrast—models of saintly if somewhat incompetent decorum. With the facile defence of "serving the ends of justice" always in the offing, this film depicts very plainly and unequivocally the woeful pandering to the appetite for morbid sensation which is a canker in modern life. The public may want this type of film, but I beg leave to doubt whether the public knows its own mind well enough to separate what is of public concern from sheer mob hysteria; and if there were no capacity for hysteria there could be no pandering to it.
—*The Birmingham Mail*

Sensation, indeed. A British film company has tackled Hollywood at its own game and beaten it. This is the best murder-mystery, with a reporter hero, yet seen. *Murder Gang* was its original title, and that explained everything to the initiated. That is the name given to the newspaper reporters who specialise in crime. We see them, like a flock of vultures, gathering round a body. Watching each other with suspicious eyes, frightened that one of them will get a "scoop." The film is packed with humour and suspense, the means by which the crime was solved being particularly neat. It is one hundred per cent. entertainment.
—Harris Deans, *The Sunday Graphic*

O.H.M.S. (Raoul Walsh—Gaumont-British.)
Wallace Ford, John Mills, Anna Lee, Grace Bradley.

There is, I suppose, something about a soldier. But what is of more concern is that there is also something about a good director, and Mr. Raoul Walsh's work here is fine, fine, fine . . . He had a tough assignment. He had to tell on the screen, with the help of the Army Council, a simple little romantic melodrama about a fugitive petty crook from New York, who, by using another man's passport, found himself in the British Army. Now, that Army Council business must have been tricky. Walsh had to depict the life of a British soldier in authentic detail. The entertainment would have gone overboard in the process with a less able man. As it is, the result is a good, clean-cut film going along at a smart pace. I think Wallace Ford in the part of the New Yorker, Tommy, is the most inspired piece of casting in a British film for a long time.
—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

Wallace Ford and John Mills as "Tommies" in O.H.M.S.

In a recent article Mr. Bernard Shaw has an amusing passage on the ways of film magnates, who, as we all know, whenever they want to make a picture on a given subject, send not for an accredited author or expert, but for the office boy. We have just had an amusing justification of this in the film called *O.H.M.S.*, which has been made "with the full co-operation of the War Office." What I want to know is how the War Office came to be let down by being asked to lend its co-operation to a story quite so desperately silly. Who invented this patriotic tale whereon to hang a display of that side of military life which, having nothing whatever to do with war, is held out as an inducement to the youth of this and any other country to come and be killed? This deplorable rubbish has been set out in full panoply of pomp and circumstance. The War Office has done its part with great zeal and efficiency, and it is an enormous pity that this loyal co-operation should not have been used to further a better story. —James Agate, *The Tatler*

Critical Summary.

The majority of the Press reviews were very favourable, but there were one or two exceptions. The subject matter is universally applauded. Propaganda is usually of doubtful box-office value, but in this case the trade consider that propaganda and entertainment have been admirably blended and look forward with confidence to a financial success.

THE BOMBING OF MADRID
(Pathé Newsreel)

The Pathé unit in Spain, which serves America, Pathé France, and the British Pathé Gazette sent to England a record of the bombing of Madrid and the entry of Franco's troops into Badajos such as never been equalled in the history of screen reporting.

Pathé, after giving several shows to the national and provincial press released about half the shots of the bombing of Madrid in the Pathé Gazette on Monday, 15th February. But the tale of Badajos and the atrocities committed there, pictured so graphically that the cameramen were arrested by Franco and all but shot, will not be told to the public. Because they fall into the "horrific" category deplored by the censor, the most important shots of Madrid and the havoc wrought there will be permanently shelved.

Pathé is to be complimented on showing the first Spanish War newsreel with story and moral, for even as it stands now, mutilated and censored, this issue of Pathé Gazette tells what is the fullest story so far.

R. P.

DREAMING LIPS. (Paul Czinner—Trafalgar Films.)
Elizabeth Bergner, Raymond Massey, Romney Brent.

Dreaming Lips, my more ribald colleagues tell me, is "a woman's picture." Praise be it *is* a woman's picture. That is what Bergner has owed us for so long; not a boy David, not a Ganymede, not a Gemma, not even a nymph, constant or otherwise, but a woman's drama, sensed and interpreted by a great artist who is a woman, too. Bergner's latest picture is just the story of a young wife, happy, loved and affectionate, who finds outside her marriage the dream she has been waiting for. It is an acutely sensitive story, working up from the first April glow of happiness to the drab facts that, for a woman, cannot be enhanced or evaded. It pulls this way and that, between ardour and a kind of narcotised splendour and the little, violent tugs of affection and custom. Czinner's direction has followed his wife's development, at every turn, in strength and subtlety. This is in every way a riper, warmer, more compelling picture than the German original, with more urgent notes of emphasis, a stronger grasp on human eventualities.
—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

Critical Summary.

Acclaimed by only a minority of the critics, the general opinion being that the tempo is far too slow. Suspect in the trade, apart from its obvious stellar appeal.

CAIN AND MABEL. (Lloyd Bacon—Warner Brothers.)
Clark Gable, Marion Davies.

Cain and Mabel follows the usual lines, but it is lively and laughsome and one comes away well content; and also, for those who favour such things, there is a stage musical-comedy too lavish ever to have been performed on a stage, and a prize-fight for heavy-weights where blows proper to an abattoir are exchanged without fatal effect, and in which Cain, the winner, loses, for a reason that I will not be so unsporting as to

CONTINENTAL FILMS

ERNTE. (Geza von Bolvary—Austrian.)

Paula Wessely, Attita Horbiger, Gina Falckenberg.

As with *Mazurka*, here again we have a story of no special distinction, yet utterly redeemed by the manner of its presentation and lifted from the commonplace by an individual performance of exceptional brilliance. Paula Wessely is another model for the film aspirant to watch and study closely. The cameras have given us many scenes of pastoral loveliness. The direction is admirable.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

My appetite may be low and panting, being content to watch merely Myrna Loy and Ginger Rogers moving about up there, but I feel no restless urge, like more intelligent critics, for a Viennese actress with a thirty-five waist and eyebrows that meet in the middle. Anybody with my gross standards cannot hope, therefore, to judge Paula Wessely. Of course, she's a good actress, she's sincere and calculates her naïveté very cleverly, and is downright and plucky through her peasant tears. On paper, she's fine. But she's not acting on paper. She's acting in a dark room on a dark night with a lot of people sneezing and at least one film critic risking 'flu on her behalf. And sincerity is not enough. Neither is clever acting, and cute horseplay, and stirring feudal devotion to the Rittmeister, and brave tears. Any other time she'd be given marks for all these things. But they were nothing short of a stab in the back, the night she gave me influenza.

—Alistair Cooke, *The Spectator*

REGINE. (Herman Grund—German.)

Luise Ullrich, Adolph Wohlbruck.

This is one of the few German pictures to be shown in England since the German film industry was aired of all but its strictly Aryan elements. Old-fashioned in story and treatment, it shows little evidence of progress since the Nazis took over the studios. The only outstanding thing about it is the performance of Luise Ullrich, who looks a little like Dietrich, speaks a little like Bergner, and acts a lot like herself, so that there can be no possibility of mistaking her for an imitation of either. Little is known of Fräulein Ullrich in England. Publicity sent over with the film proudly states that she possesses the love of home life required these days of all German women, even film actresses, but does not tell us much else. I can add that, apart from this most desirable attribute, she also possesses youth, beauty, and a naïve simplicity that is altogether charming. She plays a peasant girl who marries a rich man and has great difficulty in adjusting herself to the sophisticated life of the big city to which he belongs. —Richard Haestier, *The Star*

MAZURKA. (Willi Forst—German.)

Pola Negri, Ingeborg Theek, Albrecht Schoenhals

Mazurka leaves a rather sinister impression. The first twenty-minutes—the scared duel between the adolescent girl (beautifully acted by Ingeborg Theek) and the middle-aged expert in sexuality—are admirable. With the appearance of Miss Pola Negri, Herr Willi Forst seems deliberately to guy not only the melodramatic tale of an unknown mother and a good woman's ruin, but the star herself. Miss Negri's technique belongs to the War years and the silent film. Forst makes her run across rooms, bound along streets, a crazy corsetted Cassandra in 1917 draperies. In a scene of drunken seduction which is like an ancient still from Mr. Rotha's album, the villain (with long Svengali hair and the manner of a lion tamer) props tipsy Miss Negri against the doorpost while he takes down his top hat. Miss Negri may be unwise to return to the films, but it is a cruel idea of fun to guy this stout, glossy, gesticulating woman for the pleasure of audiences who have forgotten the star of Lubitsch's *Forbidden Paradise*.

SECOND OPINION

"Every pert little miss who fancies herself an embryo star should, in a spirit of awed humility, take this opportunity of studying the methods of an artiste whose passions come from the heart, whose voice is vibrant with feeling and whose emotions are expressed with every fibre of her being."—Sydney Carroll on Miss Negri.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

SON OF MONGOLIA. (Ilya Trauberg—Russian.)

Tseven Rabdan, Ingi-Khorlo.

Son of Mongolia is the only Russian film in a year which I have been able to enjoy without reservation . . . a film packed full of fascinating and informing novelties, with a story distinguished by the presence everywhere in it of a vast, happy, and primeval good-nature.

Producers of films should never forget the delight we take in mere information, mere novelty, and should never make the mistake of supposing that we can tire of being conducted by the camera into worlds we have not seen before. If *Son of Mongolia* were nothing but a newsreel it would still be one of the finest of current films. The landscape is of course wonderful—limitless in its distances and its dusts, and smoothed by time into the most suggestive shapes. But the people matter more. I do not expect to forget Tseven and his nomad friends; or the bald-headed lama squatting by his American alarm clock; or the other rogue of a lama who is bribed to lure Tseven into Manchuria; or the pot-bellied giant wrestlers; or the old men with wrinkled foreheads who watch them from the side-lines; or the denizens of inns and the singers of unearthly broken songs who appear for a moment in the incomparable interiors. These are obviously a great people, even to one who does not know exactly how to measure them. They have been here for ever, they are very tough and wise, and there is a strength in their smiling which seems to say that they are rooted too deeply in the sour earth ever to desire the foreign sweetness of change.

Son of Mongolia, however, is more than a newsreel. With Tseven Rabdan playing the role of Tseven, and with Ilya Trauberg doing an imaginative piece of directing, it grows into something picturesque if not epic. For Tseven travels into Manchuria on his little white horse; learns through many adventures there that his native republic is surrounded by enemies; and trots home a hero no less than a patriot. Rabdan in this role cuts a fine, merry figure: he is a plump Don Quixote who knows how to fill each landscape he crosses with human meaning, and how to sound each situation to its deepest chuckle. He is one of the best actors I have ever watched, just as this is one of the best films—an Oriental "Western" if you do not mind the contradiction in terms.

—Mark Van Doren, *The Nation*

Cain and Mabel (continued)

divulge. But to my childish mind, better to see than either the sumptuous show or the frantic ring is the slap that, in the night-restaurant, Mabel gives Larry Cain, and the ice-pail that Cain, retaliating, empties on Mabel's blonde locks. Intellectual stuff, you observe. After such a hostile beginning, need I say—but I won't. The film must be visited in person. —E. V. L., *Punch*

Marion Davies is a very lucky woman. No doubt because of the Hearst backing, they were able to get Clark Gable to appear with her in *Cain and Mabel*. Marion, who is worth over £1,000,000 of her own, shows us, on the screen, how she can't dance much and how she can't sing much. Her acting is all right, but she ought to thank heaven for Clark Gable—and the Hearst newspapers, which always say how marvellous she is. Marion Davies is a very nice girl, but, frankly, I think she ought to be allowed to retire to one of her castles and give way to someone more in need of the money, and with talents more suitable to 1937. —Hannen Swaffer, *The People*

Marion Davies and Clark Gable in "Cain and Mabel"

Wishing a healthful and lively second year to the most hopeful youngster in film journalism

ROBERT DONAT
"KNIGHT WITHOUT ARMOUR"
(Dietrich — Korda — Feyder)

GREETINGS

AND

All Good Wishes

For Your Second Year

From

MICHAEL BALCON

F. D. Klingender on

MONOPOLY GROUPS AND AMERICAN FILM FINANCE

Extracts from Evidence presented to the Federal Communications Commission, New York

READERS OF THE Film Council analysis of American film finance, published in our November number, will be interested in the following facts illustrating the relations of the Telephone Trust with the movie industry which have come to light in evidence presented in the last days of December to the Federal Communications Commission, New York.

The Giants Agree to Divide the Spoils

In the hearing of December 22nd the Radio Corporation of America admitted "that it had actually drawn up a monopoly suit against American Telephone and Telegraph Co. and Electrical Research Products, Inc., naming all the film majors except Radio Keith-Orpheum as co-defendants. . . . RCA refrained from filing the restraint of the trade suit, however, and ERPI officials admitted on the stand that all patent rights in the various fields of communication had subsequently been split up and allocated between the two companies."

(*Hollywood Reporter, Dec.* 23).

But the Course of True Love . . .

At the same hearing the Commission's attorney, Mr. Samuel Becker, produced evidence to show, however, that ERPI was in the habit of charging double royalties in cases where the recording was done on RCA apparatus. "This made it virtually impossible for independent producers to use other than ERPI recording. . . . A 1931 letter from David Sarnoff to Otterson was also shown. Sarnoff stated that RCA had already lost $75,000 and stood to lose around $200,000 a year over ERPI's stand on sound royalites." (*Ibid.*)

Using the Big Stick

"Reports of ERPI engineers to H. G. Knox that tubes and other sound equipment produced by competitors as far back as May, 1931, were better in quality and lower in cost than the ERPI equipment forced on exhibitors were introduced. . . . ERPI itself complained to Western Electric regarding prices and quality of tubes being furnished. . . . Other testimony showed that Columbia at one time developed a noise-reduction apparatus and asked whether it was an infringement on ERPI patents. G. C. Pratt of ERPI replied that the question of infringement was only of secondary importance. Columbia, as a licensee of ERPI's, had no right to make improvements and compete with ERPI, he stated. Legal action was threatened if such competition took place."

(*Hearing of December* 23*rd, Hollywood Reporter,* 24, 12).

"It was disclosed that there are (at the present time) 22 anti-trust suits pending against ERPI seeking a total of $175,281,675 damages." (*Ibid.*)

From Sound Monopoly to Control

At the hearing of December 29th:—

"John E. Otterson, president prior to June, 1935, of Electrical Research Products, Inc., outlined several of his proposals to have this corporation direct the activities of motion-picture studios, theatres and other amusement enterprises, in order to safeguard the investments of this subsidiary of the telephone company, known in the trade as ERPI.

" 'Regardless of reorganisations and receiverships in the motion picture industry at the present time,' Mr. Otterson wrote, in February, 1933, . . . 'it is desirable that we have in mind a general plan that might govern such mergers as may be effected and furnish an objective toward which the whole industry might work.'

"Mr. Otterson's letter was addressed to Winthrop W. Aldrich, president of the Chase National Bank, which institution at that time had a larger investment in the industry than ERPI, according to Mr. Otterson. . . . Mr. Otterson said that, as of November, 1932, 'the motion picture industry owes us $16,000,000 and our expected revenue from this investment within the next ten years should be approximately $65,000,000.' . . . Asked about the relation of the telephone company's business to that of the Chase Bank, Mr. Otterson said that Mr. Aldrich was a director of the telephone company and was interested in 'the motion-picture set-up' through the banking institution.

"In his plan, as outlined in the letter, Mr. Otterson said that the merger of the various studios and distribution operating companies 'can be proceeded with at once,' and added that 'as soon as adjustments and liquidation permit the theatres can be combined in a theatre-operating company.' . . . A memorandum from Mr. Otterson to E. S. Bloom, president of the Western Electric Company, . . . said that the parent company 'could control the motion-picture industry without investing any more money than it had in it at that time.' Mr. Otterson added, however, that he had declined to seek this control because it was against the general policies of the Bell Telephone system in fields outside of communications. Walter S. Gifford, president for more than ten years of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, testified later in the day concerning several phases of these policies.

" 'Our intention at the outset was to stay out of commercial ventures such as those entered into by ERPI and other groups. . . . The depression and other developments, however, have made it difficult to confine ourselves to a narrow basis and we have gone in much further than we planned at the beginning.' He added that in his opinion 'the company had developed a new art in the the motion-picture field.' He said at the close of his testimony that the telephone corporation had considered disposing of ERPI's interests, but that 'one of the stumbling-blocks' was ERPI's long-term contracts with producers for equipment used in motion picture and sound-recording apparatus, which had been the subject of this investigation."

(*New York Times, December* 30*th,* 1936).

Time Marches On—ERPI and Universal Corporation

In the hearing of December 28th, Whitford Drake, executive vice-president of Electrical Research Products, Inc., gave evidence concerning a $2,000,000 debenture stock investment of ERPI in the new Universal holding company.

According to the *New York Times,* December 29, 1936:—

"The $2,000,000 investment in debenture stock in the Universal Corporation was listed in the prospectus published in June of this year showing the capital structure of this motion-picture holding corporation. An additional $2,000,000 was invested by an English group of investors, another $1,000,000 by the Eastman Kodak Company, it was revealed.

"Mr. Drake pointed out . . . that he knew that these corporations had intended to make 'an investment of considerable sums' in this newly formed holding company. 'We expect to get out of it as soon as we can,' he added, 'as we are more interested in the operation of the company than in the ownership of stock.'

"The acquisition of other interests over a period of more than three years was also given by Mr. Drake, who explained that 'a revolving fund of $500,000' was set up in 1932 to place several of their licensed production groups on a firmer financial basis. This enabled ERPI Corporation to compete with RCA and with smaller groups, previously referred to as 'users of bootleg sound-producing equipment.' "

When on the following day Mr. Gifford was questioned about the $2,000,000 investment of ERPI in Universal, he replied, "I don't like the idea, but I believe that those who have worked for the success of ERPI had good reason for making it." (*New York Times, December* 30*th,* 1936).

Edited by

Ugly Scene in Milk Bar

An ugly scene, involving Mrs. Dulcie Throop and Abe Schwartzenheimer, *Filthfilms*' ace producer, occurred in the Nonparcil Milk Bar, one of the plague-spots of Wardour Street, yesterday.

Mrs. Throop was accompanied by her Diving Horse, Walter, whom she is trying to get into pictures. Approaching Schwartzenheimer, she suggested that a part be found for the animal in the new *Filthfilms* production, *Lousy Is The Word For Lizzie*.

Schwartzenheimer was heard to ask if Mrs. Throop would be willing to act as the horse's stand-in. Blows were exchanged and a policewoman who attempted to intervene, broke a bootlace. Mrs. Throop was taken into custody but was allowed to leave as soon as the sergeant had taken a look at her.

Walter, Mrs. Throop's Diving Horse, will be remembered as the animal blacklisted by British Studios for breaking the morality clause in its first contract with *Punk Pictures Inc.*

* * *

Those ex-waiters
Called Dictators
See their status
Come unstuck.
Burst their bubble,
What's the trouble?
They've a double—
Donald Duck.

That old meanie
Mussolini,
He has seen he
Can't compete;
Hitler's lucky,
Like the Duck he
Has out-stucky
Kind of feet.

Something's lacking
From their quacking,
They're not packing
In the herds;
And their colour—
So much duller
Than that hulla—
B'llooing bird's.

Cutting capers
(See the papers),
Losing shape as
Years roll on;
Waxing war-like,
Feeling sore like,
Growing more like
Disney's Don.

So they waddle,
Talking twaddle,
Like their model,
Wanna fight
(What a pity
Muss and Hitty
Aren't so pretty
To the sight).

I'm Something in the Movies

I have a most delightful occupation—
A task that needs a modicum of skill,
A total lack of tiresome concentration
And previous experience that's *nil*.
My colleagues swarm around me in their thousands
And echo, to a man, the words I say;
There is only one condition for obtaining this position—
You've got to know the letters O and K.

I'm something in the movies, but I've not discovered yet
Exactly why my presence is demanded "on the set,"
So I wear a high-necked sweater of a pungent shade of yellow
And try to look important as at intervals I bellow—

O.K. for lights? O.K. for sound?
O.K. for everything all round?
Is everybody OKE?
O.K. to shoot? O.K. for mike?
O.K. for anything you like?
Are you all OKYDOKE?

Oh, life is all a gala when you get a lot of pay
For wearing horn-rimmed spectacles and shouting out "O.K."

So, when you see a British-Scholtz production
And marvel at the splendour of its scenes,
Acclaim the Star, Director and construction,
But remember too the men behind the screens;
For, though to you it may sound very simple
To stand about and merely say "O.K."
The one important fact is that it wants a lot of practice
To say it in a transatlantic way.

I'm something in the movies, but I'm hazy as to what,
Except that I'm essential for the shooting of a shot.
As to naming my employment you can formulate your theories,
But, blissfully contented, I'll continue with my queries—

O.K. for lights? O.K. for sound?
O.K. for everything all round?
Is everybody OKE?
O.K. to shoot? O.K. for mike?
O.K. for anything you like?
Are you all OKYDOKE?

If I gave up my position think how badly I'd be missed
By the junior assistant whose assistant I assist!

(*From Punch*)

OFFICIAL RECEIVER TO STAR IN NEW FILM

George Shrubsole, the Official Receiver who has become a familiar figure at the *Phoney Films* Studio during the past few weeks, is to star in a new picture now on the floor.

Shrubsole's unfailing courtesy and charm of manner have endeared him to the Studio staff.

One day last week he was seen by Homer Burp, chairman of *Phoney Films* and immediately signed for the star part in the new picture.

"We gotta brand new heart-throb in this Shrubsole guy," said Burp. "He's got what it takes."

"And he takes what you've got," put in our correspondent humorously.

"And what a profile," went on Burp. "It's gonna drape the femme audiences over their seats when they take a gander at this monkey. We gotta big song number lined up for him called *Carey Street's a Fairy Street When You Are There, Cherie.*"

The film, originally called *Love on the Runnymede* and dealing with the life of King John, is to be re-titled *Men Were Receivers Ever* to suit Shrubsole's personality.

Forward, Miss Francis

While producers fall over themselves to make pictures of our mighty Services, it is deplorable that they should have so long overlooked what is surely the greatest of all our Services.

I refer, of course, to our telephone disinfecting service and the brave women who administer it. Every day in all weathers, these heroines go quietly about their business, a prey to all the perils of the Big City. And not only that, compelled to wear comic hats.

I have drafted out a rough scenario with one of these courageous girls as its central figure. Here it is, whether you like it or not:—

Violet de la Rue is head phone-sprayer with the Red Rose Phone Fumigating Co., and her technique with "the gun," as the girls laughingly refer to the instrument, is one to which all the younger members of the profession aspire.

One day, Violet calls at the office of J. B. Burgeon, wealthy moth-ball importer. Just as she is leaving, he engages her in conservation. She answers (she's not proud) and within five minutes the big libertine has asked her to his apartment to see his Japanese prints.

She consents, but her suspicions are aroused when he stops his car on the way and buys some Japanese prints.

Hurt, angry, she empties her disinfectant spray in his face and leaps out of the car.

Next week, when Violet calls, Burgeon wreaks a terrible vengeance. **He hides the telephone.** He tells her it is in the safe and when she steps in, determined to do her duty, he slams the door. After this Burgeon is without a telephone, but he is also without Violet, which is a lucky break for anybody. (*That goes for me too.—Ed.*).

(Another smashing instalment next week, you beasts).

LORUM

Rodney Hobson

Snooks Greiser, W.F.N.'s intolerable lift-boy, took one Sir G. Craig for a ride the other day.

Snooks: "So you're going to fly the Atlantic with the Coronation Film, huh?"

Sir G. Craig: "Well, and why not?"

Snooks: "And maybe after that you'll fly the Pacific with the Cup Tie Newsreels, huh?"

Sir G. Craig: "Well, why——"

Snooks: "And just now you'll be practising taking little items about hospital openings across the Solent, huh? Third Floor, parachutes, lifebelts, lucky sixpences, divers' suits and *World Film News*."

I wish Oscar Homolka
Would break into a polka,
That frown
Gets me down.

*

Robert Taylor
Might have been a sailor,
Or a chiropractor,
But not an actor.

*

If film-stars got sacked
For not being able to act,
That would leave us, of course,
With Buck Jones's horse.

*

Our links with the past
Are disappearing fast,
There is little left to us now but George Arliss
And bits of the Crystal Parliss.

See These at Your Local Cinemas, or Not

Love In the Run. A startling exposé of the sex-life of Buff Orpingtons.

Trail of the Lonesome Pain. Drama of a surgeon who put appendicitis before love.

The Man who Minded his Change. You guessed it—Scots stuff.

Sing, Baby, Sing-Sing. Fun in the penitentiary. Should awaken old memories for a lot of you, I shouldn't wonder.

Sweet Hallo's. Publicity hounds meet American star at Waterloo.

Men Are Not Cods. Believe it or not.

Piccadilly Jam. A slow-moving story of London's traffic—and we don't mean white slave.

We Who Are About To Try. A promising story of the British Film Industry.

Has anyone seen a good Samaritan?

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Romance of the Movies, by Leslie Wood. Heinemann, 15/-

This book is clearly not intended to be that authentic history of movies for which there is so great a need. Instead Mr. Wood has written an absorbing account of movies from the early discoveries and shows of Mr. William Friese-Green of Bath down to television and its likely relation to the cinema. We are carried through the cinema's early struggles against prejudice and indifference; through the difficulties experienced during the period before the necessary material conditions for its exploitation had been created; through the struggles between the trusts, seeking control of the industry by seizure of patent rights, and the individual producer; down to the subsequent rise of the great companies, controlling both production and distribution and reaching an audience undreamt of by the peep-show pioneers.

In surveying the beginnings of the industry Mr. Wood treats it from a British angle, arguing that Friese-Green was the first to invent the cinematograph, though in other countries similar results were being got, not always by the same methods. In fact the mechanics of movies are stressed throughout the book, rather, we feel, to the exclusion of other considerations in the growth of movie. It is not only the combination of many inventions and experiments that has made the cinema of to-day but also the social conditions and environment in which it has grown up and the use—or misuse—of the opportunities provided.

The particular merit of the book is that it provides a readable, lively well-written account of the march of the movies for the non-technical reader.

Photography Year Book. Cosmopolitan Press, 21/-

This year's Photography Year Book, representing the work of most of the famous photographers of the world, affords a valuable conspectus of the position of photography at the present time. It is not expensive at the price.

The photographs are grouped under subject-headings (portrait, landscape, and the like), and these give some indication of the trend of fashion in modern photographic practice.

The trend is towards simplicity and straightforward representation. The photographic technique does not seem to be improving; for the last few years it had been difficult to see where improvement is possible in this respect. But the subjects and the treatment show a welcome return to normal. The fierce camera-angles, rhetorical over-corrections, myopic focusing effects, fuzzy bromoils, are in a very small minority nowadays, though still there are photographers who like to show reversed prints, and others who aim at making crayon-portraits with the camera, or bas-reliefs or surrealist compositions. The heyday of such stunts is over. They were just the contortions of the photographer in the toils of jealousy, envying the oil-painter and the line-draughtsman, whose work is always recognisably his own. They are now admitting, it seems, that the game is up. It will never be possible to look at a photograph, as one looks at a line-drawing, and say at once who did it.

The work represented in this book is all good. Photographically it is magnificent. Artistically—well, artistically, one is never sure of any photograph, however beautiful the lady may be.

Portrait Photography, by Franz Feidler. Newnes, 10/6

Catering for both professionals and amateurs, this books deals with photography from a strictly practical point of view. A unique feature is its section on physiognomy which not only deals with the significance of the features but offers an interpretation of individual characteristics in the light of human character.

Treatment of the sitter, group and child photography, backgrounds and lighting are among the subjects dealt with. The illustrations are chosen for their instructional rather than their exhibition value and many of them are paired in order to show the results from the use of varying lenses and filters. The virtues of the miniature camera receive full attention.

Kinematograph Year Book (1937). Kinematograph Publications, Ltd., 10/-

The twenty-fourth issue of this, the film trade's only reference book, covers the usual essential information of practical value to renters, exhibitors, and members of the industry in general. A feature of the new issue is an article: "Taking Stock for the Trade of 1937," by S. G. Rayment, editor of the *Kinematograph Weekly*. Mr. Rayment has summed up past achievement and future outlook dispassionately and fairly. He points out that the British studios have something to learn in catering for the intelligent patron and the general public at the same time and he indicates the need for "higher direction: the big organizing and co-ordinating brain which America has evolved and we have not."

He adds: "There is no need to play down to the unintelligent, all we have to do is to avoid treating the millions with contempt, and leaving their entertainment to others who have a better conception of their opportunities. To give the most helpful encouragement to the coming British film, critics will have to remind themselves that the West End is not England."

Legal questions are dealt with by Norman Hart, B.A., Solicitor to the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, in a special article. Information on British studio personnel and equipment is brought up-to-date. There is a digest of all Acts concerned with the Industry and a special article, by A. L. Carter, is devoted to a review of developments in technique and equipment, with details of all sound systems.

The Kine Year Book admirably fulfils its function of serving the industry and the businessmen thereof. But when shall we have a cinema reference book of rather wider scope and wider appeal?

Criminals—For General Release!

Police have always used every scientific method to trace down criminals. Bloodhounds, racing cars, aeroplanes are familiar weapons in their hands. American police are now taking up motion-pictures. They have under consideration a central film library organised like their finger-print library and containing negatives of specially prepared shots of criminals posed and speaking for this purpose. Local police stations may order prints at their discretion. A new development is expected. If the police have a screen record of a man once in their hands but now at large and wanted, they are planning to invite newsreel companies to co-operate in distributing such records all over America so that every audience will be on the alert to spot their man. Newsreel producers are said to be eager for such films.

Criminals have already been arrested by policemen familiar only with films of the wanted man. The police do not anticipate difficulty in making the criminals act naturally when the films are being taken.

They say that they have pretty good control of the criminals and that by taking pictures at different times the difficulties due to distorted acting will be overcome. Besides, say the police, so many people want to get into the movies that they will commit crimes just to have their pictures taken.

(*Note: From "The Schwarzkopf Method of Indentifying Criminals," a paper read by J. Frank, junr., at the Autumn* 1936 *meeting of the Society of Motion-Picture Engineers of America at Rochester, New York, and reprinted in the Journal of that body for February*, 1937).

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THE ROLE OF THE AUTHOR

Why is California allowed to steal our best authors?

Must we always wait for Hollywood to discover our National talent?

asks Donald Sutherland

"Piccadilly Jim" scripted by P. G. Wodehouse

NOWHERE on earth has original thought a poorer opportunity to make itself heard than in the British film industry of to-day. And that is why nine British scripts out of ten are not worth the paper they are written on. These are sweeping statements but they are based on five years professional criticism in the course of which every major British production has been reviewed.

In photography, lighting, acting . . . even in direction, although one could not have said as much two years ago, British films are just as good as the best from any other nation. But those scripts . . . !

Between every author and his picturised works hover a cloud of "specialists." Their particular speciality seems to lie in reducing original thought to conventionalised forms. They are paid for their knowledge of film technique, of the censor's requirements, of the director's idiosyncrasies or some like shibboleth. They hack, cut and slash till a nobly designed piece of literary brocade emerges from their hands looking like a soiled patchwork quilt. The excuse offered for this vandalism is that the original author does not know the requirements of the screen. Actually, the reason is different. It is done because the author does not know what the producer thinks the cinema audience may want. Therein lies a distinction with a difference. If the author were to retort that the producer, by his own works betrayed, knew even less of story and character building, who would listen to him?

So you have the strange spectacle of a rapidly expanding industry, officially hungry for more and "different" stories, unofficially stamping out any glimmer of originality to be found in its purchases.

Authors are not credited with enough intelligence to grasp the fundamentals of cinematic treatment for themselves. These mysteries only can be found in the bead of some obscure youth attached to the studio for a weekly wage, who meets the incursions of the outsider with all the self-protective, calculated hocus-pocus of a closed corporation, determined to keep the newcomer at arms' length.

Hollywood in her time has played some queer pranks upon authors, but nowadays she welcomes them with open arms. She pays them royally and offers every possible co-operation and facility if they should happen to show real aptitude for what amounts to a new literary form. In America, any author of a successful novel or play is given an opportunity to work for the screen on generous terms. Some succeed, and you have the specialised screen writer like Frances Marion, Dorothy Parker and so on. Not content with American writers, Hollywood reaches out for our own. Hugh Walpole, R. C. Sheriff, P. G. Wodehouse, R. J. Minney, A. P. Lipscomb and many others have worked in California. They were all here before Hollywood heard of them, but they were offered no chance at home. And even now we are raiding Hollywood for experienced American scenarists because we are too much afraid to gamble on our own—and too short-sighted to pay for and make use of the men and women who ought to work in British studios.

Naturally this attitude evokes a mild contempt in the minds our producers most need and least consider. Letters in England look on cinema not as a Cinderella they might be proud to serve but as a Mrs. Midas-Malaprop whose vicarious hospitality is at times useful.

The old dictum that America makes the best bad pictures in the world is borne out daily in picture houses all over Britain. And it is done by good writing. Every filmgoer knows the picture in which pungent dialogue redeems timeworn situations for the twentieth time. These same filmgoers have also suffered British films in which verbosity obscures good stories, in which excellent actors wrestle with lines which would destroy a Gable in two pictures.

A poor script, ill prepared, rebashed from time to time on the set as shooting progresses gives no one a chance. It means retake after retake, with an ever increasing strain on the nerves of all concerned. It means waste of time which is waste of money.

Owing to sheer want of imagination, British producers have largely failed to build up their own stars, but there are still large numbers of good writers and good stories left to us.

It might be worth while letting them speak for themselves.

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NEWSREEL RUSHES

by the Commentator

—Courtesy G.B.

TELEVISIONEWS. Rearing into a giant question mark, an old Wardour Street dragon comes to life again at reports that the B.B.C. will soon have available two television "Outside Broadcast" vans, complete with portable Emitron cameras. With outside television thus a stage nearer, Wardour Street trembles as it hears the dread dragon's hissed question:—*WILL TELEVISION KILL THE NEWSREELS?* A first glance at the problem seems to show television as destined to sweep all other forms of reporting out of the picture. For the new medium will be able to bring the world into the world's homes with all the atmosphere of the actual event unfolding, and reported with the speed of a radio running commentary. But closer investigation reveals less obvious facts, which materially alter the composition of the television versus newsreel picture. Three headed is the answer to the dragon's question: first, the importance of editing; second, the commercial aspect; third, censorship.

THE EDITOR'S JOB, as applied to press and newsreel, is to combine the individual and isolated work of a large number of reporters or cameramen into a composite picture of the news in which every angle is covered. When several cameramen are working on the same story, none can know the relative importance of his small section of the job, while he is still on the job. The cameraman who scoops a slow motion shot of the Grand National favourite falling at Valentine's may feel that his is the star shot of the day, but how wrong he would be if at the same moment at the other end of the course the Grand Stand had caught fire. Hence the importance of the editor, who sees each shot in its true perspective *vis-á-vis* all the others, who sifts thousands of feet of film to pick the most telling incidents, the most exciting angles, who can do all this because he comes between the cameraman and the public.

BUT NO EDITOR can come between the television camera and the viewing screens in a million homes; what the camera sees, it passes on within a minute fraction of a second. The best that the television editor can do is to fade from one camera to another, with little certainty that the view via the second will be much better than via the first. He may plaster every inch of the Grand National course with cameras, but when the favourite falls at one of the far jumps, can he ensure that the nearest camera is "on the air" at the moment? On the newsreel screen, the Derby runners round Tattenham Corner—suddenly comes a flash cut-in of a man on the rails with his hat pushed over his face—to bring a roar of approval from the cinema audience. But the chances are ten million to one against the television camera catching one such fleeting moment.

WITHOUT EDITING, news is dull. The essence of press and screen reporting is that it can compress into a few moments the thrills of many hours, that in a flash it can leap through time. By comparison, the ears and eyes of radio and television will be slow and cumbersome. But the newsreels will hold their own only through the skill and imagination they bring to their editing. Television can give the world a general impression of the Royal Opening of Parliament, or the Boat Race, but it will be left to the newsreels to add all the unrehearsed details that recreate the living story. Thus television may bring just that stimulating competition that the present hand-in-glove working of the different reels fails to provide. Television will kill the badly produced newsreel.

COMMERCIALISM. Probably over 90 per cent of present day newsreel stories are based on hope of publicity for someone or something. The year's almost endless list of launchings, public demonstrations, and official openings are all part of someone's advertising campaign. The classic example comes from America, where, through every Winter, Miami Beach Florida is prepared to feed and house in its best hotel at its own expense, one cameraman from each of the newsreels. Miami Beach knows well that, with the rest of America fog-bound, harassed New York editors will be only too ready to include in their reels the "sunny Miami" stories which the resident cameramen will send north. In the same way, our own Wimbledon Lawn Tennis, Twickenham Rugger, Earls Court Boxing, authorities, and many other, provide free entry for the newsreels because they foresee increased interest in the games brought by newsreel publicity. But the newsreel publicity involves showing only a minute fraction of the match, only a few concentrated flashes of the prolonged excitement of the whole; and those flashes are shown hours after the match is over, with little possibility of affecting the "gate." Television must, if it is to "get the high spots," give the whole match to the whole country with the speed of a radio commentary. Both the B.B.C. and the newsreels have already had experience of what happens when the owners of a great stadium decide that their interests threaten to be adversely affected by radio and screen reports. It needs little imagination to guess those same gentlemen's answers to a request to televise the *WHOLE* match to the *WHOLE* country! There seems little doubt that television will be the world's greatest box-office and turnstile killer, and as such will be a deadly enemy where the newsreel will continue in the friendship of mutual advantage.

CENSORSHIP, in the official "B.B.F.C." sense, does not at present apply to the newsreels, but in fact censorship through the editor does exist. Mostly through fear of box-office unpopularity, editors invariably cut gruesome, anti-religious, or blatant propaganda pictures. Often Whitehall makes an unofficial request that a certain shot should be cut. No British naval pictures may be released without having been viewed by Admiralty officials. The reason: the cameramen may have inadvertently filmed secret equipment. With television all such censorship will be impossible, leading to many a newsreel story being barred from the viewing screen.

THAT TELEVISION MAY HELP THE NEWSREELS, is perhaps the most fantastic shadow cast before an event that is well within the bounds of possibility. For television may one day solve the newsreel's biggest problem—distribution. Though the B.B.C hold a monopoly of broadcast television, there seems nothing in the present law to stop television by wire along privately rented Post Office cables. So why not every cinema in Britain wired to the newsreel production departments, so that no sooner is the first print of an edited story off the printing machine, than it can be simultaneously televised to every screen in the country.

ALL HONOUR to British Movietone for their promise to film the Coronation in colour. Such courage is rare in our newsreels, but in this instance will be amply repaid. Every cinema in the country will want to sign up with Movietone, and as they appear to have signed an exclusive contract with Technicolor, who in turn seem to be the only colour system with adequate processing laboratories in this country, none of the other reels look like being able to offer colour to their patrons. Also impressive are Movietone's arrangements to fly the Coronation films to New York. By special plane, which must leave England by about 4 p.m., they hope to get the films aboard the airship Hindenburg before she leaves Germany at 8 p.m. on the evening of Coronation Day. In that case, and with fair weather, New York should see the Coronation within two days!! But Movietone haven't said how they hope to catch the plane at 4 p.m.!

An Appeal

I WISH to commend the work of the National Film Library to all those interested in the history and development of the screen.

Within the space of forty years a new art has come into being. The pioneers in this, as in other fields, made little attempt to preserve their products once they had served their purpose. Not one really early film exists in its entirety. But more or less complete fragments have been unearthed from vaults where they have lain forgotten for years. They are now in the safe keeping of the National Film Library in this country or of similar institutions abroad.

There are, no doubt, many other survivors of the days of the Nickelodeon, Electric Palaces and Cinedromes, but they have to be sought out, treated and put into safe keeping if they are not to harden, shrink, or fade to such an extent as soon to be worthless.

Some of the masterpieces produced as recently as the immediate post-War years have been entirely lost because of the junking of every copy after the commercial run was over. The National Film Library intends to prevent other irreparable losses of this sort occurring. The student of to-day as well as of the future should have access to a complete record of the development of the cinema from the standpoints of production, camera technique, the art of a noted player, the changes in public taste and box-office appeal, etc.

The National Film Library has been in being for nearly two years. During that period it has acquired copies of many old films, and through the generosity of the film trade it is now receiving copies of most of the important productions to-day.

More funds must be obtained if the National Film Library is to carry out its work on a scale comparable to that of libraries in other countries which are in receipt of large sums from the public purse or research foundations.

Money is wanted for three main purposes. Firstly, old films must be bought and preserved so that the collection may be made really representative of the history of the cinema.

Secondly, copies of many of these films should be made available to the many thousands of people in the country who are interested in the history of the Film, and who wish to exhibit them at lectures, demonstrations and so forth. Copies of a few pre-War films have already been made and are available from the Loan Section of the Library to individuals and societies in membership of the Institute.

Lastly, means must be adopted to preserve the films permanently. The British Kinematograph Society, at the request of the Film Institute, lately set up a strong committee of investigation. One of its recommendations was that films " as a matter of routine should be subjected to complete refixation and thorough washing in many changes of water with a final rinse in distilled water." This expensive process must be undertaken if the Library is properly to fulfil its function.

As President of the National Film Library I appeal to everybody who reads these words to help in this project ; but especially do I appeal to those in the Industry itself.

SUTHERLAND.

NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY, 4 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

PEOPLE WITH PURPOSES

From the Board of Trade Journal we learn that the Department of Overseas Trade has received from the Director of Canadian Trade Publicity in Great Britain a notice to the effect that his Government offers, free of charge, to schools and other institutions in the London area, the use of a library of cinematograph films, with complete projection equipment and an operator. These films are also available through the Empire Library at the Imperial Institute.

To amplify the subject matter of the films and add to their educational value an appropriate lecture will be given by Mr. Clayton Atto, a Canadian and a graduate of McGill University, at present in England.

* * *

Booklets on London and a film dealing with municipal activities are projected by the General Purposes Committee of the L.C.C.

* * *

A Mobile L.M.S. Projection rail unit is carrying instructional films to audiences of 421,000 employees throughout the country.

* * *

At the Imperial Institute Cinema, an hour of world travel films can be had by children for a penny. *Plantation People*, a Cadbury film, shot in Technicolor was recently shown at the Institute. This film describes the life of the peoples of Trinidad, the gathering of coconuts, bananas, sugar-cane, cocoa and grape fruit.

* * *

London firemen now have their own cinema for instructional purposes.

* * *

Colour has been used in a film to illustrate so unusual a subject as the manufacture of manure from garden refuse. The film, made by Messrs. Adco, Ltd., is used in conjunction with a lecture on "Organic Manures for the Garden."

* * *

A Bradford shoe repairing firm has prepared an instructional film for showing to its employees.

* * *

From America comes *Pastal Inspector*, a feature film made with the United States Post Office as a background. The story indicates the part played by postal workers in fighting the gangster menace in the States.

* * *

Popular Science, a colour film sponsored by the magazine of that title, is being shown in this country. It illustrates the contents of the magazine.

A publicity film for the city of Bristol, *Bristal—Birthplace of America*, is being shown in this country and in the United States.

* * *

A decree has been passed in Berlin making it necessary for all cinemas to include at least one documentary or propaganda film in every programme. The German Government gave its visa to 360 propaganda films during the past year.

* * *

St. John Ambulance Association have sponsored an air raid precaution film. This was recently shown throughout the Bournemouth area.

* * *

Twelve new films of Canada and ten of New Zealand have been added to the Empire library at the Imperial Institute, South Kensington.

* * *

Catholic Film Society's new programme of propaganda films includes a picture made in the Aran Islands, a film dealing with the subject of Holy Matrimony, and two comedies. The Society hopes to provide every parish with its own projector for propaganda film shows.

* * *

A number of propaganda films have been prepared to teach new methods of agriculture to the Natives in the Straits Settlements.

* * *

Land of Promise is the title of a new picture prepared for propaganda purposes by the Zionist Council.

* * *

Recruiting for Clann nah Eireann (The Irish Youth Movement) is being assisted by a propaganda film dealing with the traditions of Ireland.

R.P.S. Programme

A paper entitled "The Special Effects Department," is to be given by H. Chevalier, of the Denham Studios, to the Royal Photographic Society's Kinematograph Section, on March 18th (the meeting having been altered from the customary fourth Friday owing to Easter).

Mr. Chevalier has obtained special permission from Alexander Korda to use for his demonstration shots from many Denham productions, and has also secured the co-operation of the process departments of other studios.

Tickets for this meeting, which commences at 7.45 p.m., may be obtained from the Joint Secretary of the Kine Section, R. Howard Cricks, F.R.P.S., 159 Wardour Street, W.1. The meeting is held at 35 Russell Square, W.C.1.

In Production

G.B.I.
The Gap (Air Defence)
Voyage of the Discovery
Heredity Series (4 films)
Secrets of Life Series (12 films)
West Indies Series (12 films)

Realist Film Unit
A film about schools, by Basil Wright

Publicity Films
Pioneers of Safety (working title—for Dunlop)
Gallons of Goodness (C.W.S. Milk)

Strand Films
The Future's in the Air
Day in the Life of a Statian Superintendent
Watch and Ward in the Air
Rice (working title)
Tin (working title)
Malaya (working title)
Let's Have a Holiday
Oil (working title)
Spring in England
We Are Building
Land Settlement
Social Service
Lifeboats
Lead

G.P.O. Film Unit
We Live in Two Worlds (International communications)
Road Transpart
Big Money (The Nation's Budget)

Films for Children

The British Film Institute has published at 1*s.* the Report of the Conference on Films for Children which took place on November 20th and 21st last. The Conference was organised to consider how film entertainment specifically designed for children could be provided at public cinemas. Amongst the speakers were Mr. S. W. Harris, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office, Mr. S. Rowson, President of the British Kinematograph Society, Dr. Emanuel Miller, Honorary Director of the East London Child Guidance Clinic, Mr. Kenneth Nyman, Chairman of the London Branch of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, and Mr. Sidney Bernstein, Managing Director of the Bernstein chain of theatres. The British Film Institute is considering the proposals that emerged from the Conference so as to put them into effect as soon as possible.

IS THIS MERLE OBERON'S FINGERPRINT?

It wouldn't cause you a flutter if it were. But print that in a film-fans' paper and thousands would get a top-note thrill. It's no good measuring the public by your own yardstick. You've got to study them very hard to discover what they like and dislike. That's our job. We know our public. And that's probably why we get so many advertisers coming back to us for more and more films.

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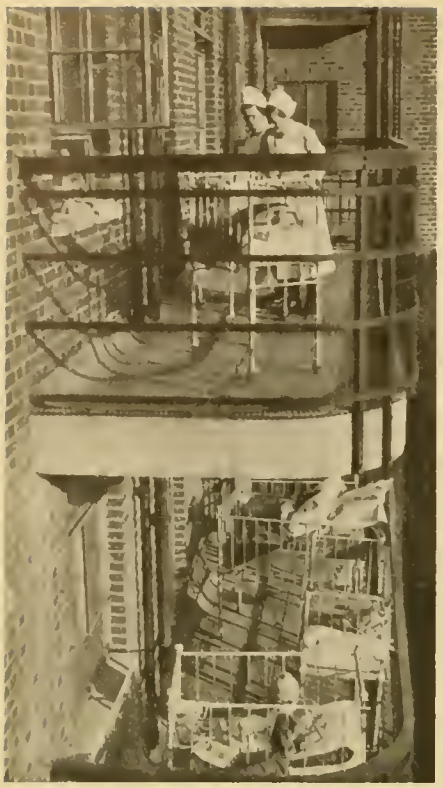

FILMING A HOSPITAL

By Andrew Buchanan

(Sixth of Series for Amateurs)

HAVING STUDIED THE methods which should be employed in filming such impersonal and scattered subjects as villages, towns, factories, farms and places abroad, let us turn to producing a comprehensive study of a particular phase of human activity which is making an important contribution to the well-being of the community —work which affects everyone. In planning this, we shall probably be helping one of the many deserving causes to be found in every town, for we shall publicise, via the screen, some vital work that is always going on. We shall be giving sensible practical help that makes no attempt to be patronising. Somewhere, maybe, efforts are being made to build a new and wider bridge, to construct finer roads, to demolish uninhabitable houses, or preserve old historic places to form an oasis in the middle of a modern desert; to create pleasant parks—for people, not cars. Each and all of these activities offer material for interesting films, which can be planned to show the progress of the work, thereby creating valuable records. Within the same category, yet dominating all, is the work of the hospital, and a little film offering glimpses of what goes on behind the familiar walls will do much to awaken public interest.

Naturally, there are as many ways of approaching this subject as there are hospitals, and it will be found that the layout of the building and the character of the Matron will materially affect one's production. Some hospitals will be willing to have everything filmed, from the operation theatre to the coal cellar, whilst others will permit only the waiting-room, and a long shot, through glass doors, of the children's ward, to be shot. I feel, therefore, that the best thing I can do is to relate my own experiences when filming the Infants Hospital, near Victoria.

I weaved a slight story into the production, to knit together the scattered activities of the place, and you can easily do the same without deviating from documentary tactics, for the story must necessarily be secondary to the work of the hospital. Accordingly, I began with a studio replica of a working class kitchen, in which a small boy was fiddling with his father's wireless set, whilst his mother crouched over a sewing machine. The set was in bits, all over the table, as sets usually are when there is a good programme, and, of course, the boy lifted up each little part, examined it, put it in his mouth, sucked it, and put it down again. I showed this highly technical process in several large close-ups of his face. Then came a close-up of his grubby hand picking up yet another screw. This, in the next shot, went into his mouth and—HE SWALLOWED IT! He visibly swallowed it, because although shaped like a screw, the object was made of liquorice! His mother ignored his terrified antics, thinking he was fooling as usual, but when his father returned, found a screw missing, and heard the boy howling, he put two and two together, and rushed him off to the Infants Hospital.

Lapse of Time

This building possesses an attractive modern exterior, around which broad black balconies wind themselves. I shot several scenes which included the building, some from the road looking up, others from the balconies looking down, to bridge the lapse of time during which the boy was being brought along, and the pathetic little family was finally observed hurrying up to the building, from one of the above mentioned balcony shots. I then took a close-up of an attractive plaque over the entrance, modelled and coloured in the Italian style, portraying the figure of a child, and this cut to a pavement shot into which the running feet of the parents and boy entered. A medium shot from the middle of the road then revealed the whole entrance, the plaque, and the three hurrying figures. My next shot was from within the entrance hall, showing the family, in silhouette, entering the doors and turning right. Next, a close-up of a door leading into an examination room.

Our lights were concealed in the room, so that when the figures entered, they were visible as they walked forward, and were met by a nurse. The screen was next filled with the dial of a weighing machine, showing the pointer swinging round. The reason for this was disclosed in the next medium shot which enabled us to see the nurse weighing the boy. Incidentally, every patient is weighed there, irrespective of the nature of the complaint. The nurse then walked to a desk and filled in details on a chart. We showed her hand in close-up doing this, and intercut the shot with glimpses of the boy, trying not to cry. A long shot of the room was then taken from a far corner, and we saw the boy being picked up and carried out of the room, followed by the parents. A title explained that he was to be X-Rayed in order to locate the screw, and diagnose the degree of seriousness of the trouble.

We began this sequence by showing the mother sitting on a form in the waiting-room, whilst the father walked nervously to and fro. The word X-Ray followed in a close-up, and moved off the screen as the door upon which it was printed opened. I took the camera further back to show the whole of the door, as it opened, and also to see into the X-Ray room, our lights being concealed within. The apparatus was vaguely visible, and the nurse's figure could also be seen. I then entered the room, and raised the camera as high as the tripod would permit, and shot down on the small boy, who was lying on a couch looking frightened, whilst the nurse stroked his forehead. Above him hovered the apparatus, its gleaming shape jutting down from the top of the frame. An X-Ray Sister stood by a panel of controls. Next, a close-up of her fingers turning one of the dials. Then another close-up of a power switch, and her hand entered, and pulled down a lever. A medium long shot revealed all the apparatus above the couch, and this slowly dissolved into a shot showing the backs of a doctor and a nurse, thrown into silhouette by the light of a frosted glass panel, upon which rested the negative of the X-Ray photograph. This they were studying intently. Then a close-up of the negative, and a finger located the black mark which denoted the exact position of the screw inside the boy.

Camera Angles

Of course, this was a genuine photograph which has been previously taken, showing a real screw that had been swallowed, and it was on account of the existence of such "evidence" that we had planned the liquorice screw incident. Another title explained that for a few days the boy would be given treatment which might disperse the cause of the trouble, and if this failed he would be operated on. The camera then looked down on him lying in bed. You will have observed that most of the shots of the little patient were shot from a high level, the object being to emphasise the helplessness of the small figure. In a contrasting shot of him from a slightly lower level we saw his arm dangling through the bars of the bed, and on the floor, a little toy motor car. He lay gazing at the ceiling. The leaves of a calendar then fluttered away in close-up, denoting the passing of three days, by which time the operation was deemed necessary, and so the last of the

Filming a Hospital

(*Continued from opposite page*)

calendar dates dissolved into a glass topped cabinet filled with bottles. Among these was the chromium gauze-framed mask of the anæsthetic outfit, and a rubber gloved hand slowly removed it.

A long shot revealed the fact that the patient lay on the theatre bed in a small room adjoining, and standing behind him was the masked figure of the anæsthetist, holding the apparatus. Two masked assistants stood by. This cut to a long shot of the operation theatre, where the surgeon and two more assistants, masked and gloved, were making final arrangements. The great theatre light shone down on the space into which the bed would be wheeled. The patient was then moved in, the bed sliding past the camera in close-up. A medium shot showed the white figures closing round the bed, and the light being adjusted. This cut to a group of heads looking down. Now, it is interesting to learn that although no actual operation took place, the effect was so realistic that an audience was convinced it was genuine. This was due to pictorial suggestion, suspense, and careful cutting. From the intent masked faces I cut to a close-up of a side table, upon which were arrayed, in perfect order, rows of surgical instruments. A gloved hand entered, and picked up several pairs of delicate scissors. This was followed by a medium shot of the patient, covered in white material. A section of this was removed, and clipped back by the scissors, revealing a bare portion of flesh.

This process was quickly intercut with close-ups of the heads looking down. A long shot increased suspense, for the grouped figures prevented the audience seeing what was actually going on. I then returned to a close-up of the table top, and a hand slowly removed the scalpel. Once again, the heads of the assistants looking down, and then a large close-up of the surgeon's head, which bent lower and lower, as, presumably, he performed the operation. At this moment, the scene dissolved into a medium shot of a sunny balcony, and there we saw the little patient lying in bed, playing happily with the toy motor car which had previously been seen lying on the floor. Following this, more fluttering leaves from the calendar, and through them we saw the parents leading the boy, now recovered, from the hospital.

I trust that, by having detailed the shots as accurately as memory permits, it will be possible for the reader to visualise the film, and to understand the fundamental treatment of the subject. It will have been observed that the narrative was made to flow by the frequent insertion of additional shots—mostly close-ups, which enabled the major action to make progress, and also to create suspense. I have no hesitation in advocating amateurs to regard hospitals, welfare centres and local clubs as suitable film material, primarily because they introduce the human element, and will give valuable experience in the handling of people. So far the amateur has concentrated upon knitting machines, cathedrals and the inhabitants of farm yards, but, believe me, human beings need approaching quite differently, and the director who, by his skill, patience and confidence, can make ordinary people behave naturally before the camera is well on the road to creating human stories which really matter.

NEWS FROM AMATEUR CLUBS

THE METEOR FILM PRODUCING SOCIETY of Glasgow have completed their film, *Fourth in Hand*, and have entered it for the Scottish Amateur Film Festival, which takes place on February 20th in Glasgow. The Hon. Anthony Asquith will be adjudicator at this Festival, and among the awards to be competed for are the Victor Saville Cup and the Andrew Buchanan Trophy.

A list of the club's productions may be secured from the programme secretary, Ian S. Ross, 80 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, by any person wishing to hire their films.

THE BECKENHAM CINE SOCIETY has steadily progressed during each of its six years of existence, and ambitious plans are in hand for 1937.

A flat has been rented where members have been able to meet at any time. A studio and theatre have been fitted out for their use, while other rooms have been converted into a workshop, a kitchen, a dark-room, and a recreation room for indoor sports.

It is now possible for those interested in the work of the Society, but uncertain as to whether or not they wish to become members, to become Associates at the cost of 5*s*. per annum. The Committee is convinced that, given the opportunity of seeing Amateur films in production, Associates will want to play an active part and become full members. On March 2nd, at 8.15 p.m. George H. Sewell is to give a talk to Associates on colour photography.

Headquarters are at 7 Victoria Buildings, Beckenham Road, and the Secretary is Miss Mary Davies, 105 Clockhouse Road, Beckenham, Kent.

ACE MOVIES were recently visited at their studios during the filming of *Luna Park* by The Whitehall Cine Society, a club of individual film-makers. Members of the visiting society, possessing no studio facilities themselves, were impressed by the organisation and equipment required for interior production.

The problem of producing sound films, which worries all similar organisations, is receiving urgent consideration in view of the rumour that a commercial concern, at present manufacturing professional equipment, is shortly to market the necessary equipment to enable amateurs to produce sound on sixteen mm. film to a degree of efficiency equal to the standard of present day sixteen mm. photography. The fact that even apart from the capital outlay on equipment, production costs will increase by 100 per cent, will be a problem for clubs working, as most do, within narrow financial limits. Ace Movies feel that at first a probable solution will lie in a group of clubs acquiring between them the necessary recording outfit, and will be glad to hear from any clubs within a reasonable radius interested in such a proposition.

The Secretary of this Society is E. W. C. Wood, 15 Openview, S.W.18, and the studios are at 90 High Street Mews, Wimbledon, S.W.19.

BALHAM AMATEUR CINE CLUB, now nearing the end of its second year, has started, but had to abandon as many as three films owing to members of the cast leaving the neighbourhood. One short comedy of a Sunday's hike in a downpour of rain, has been finished, and two more films—*The Strange Case of Doctor Rintelin*, a 400 foot drama on 16 mm., and *The Infernal Triangle*, an informal comedy on 9.5 mm.—are nearing completion. It is hoped that a new comedy, *The Queue*, will go into production this month.

The Club now organises monthly projection evenings, when friends and members of other Societies will be accommodated in the suitably adapted Club Room, where sound and projection equipment have been installed.

Meetings take place every Tuesday and Friday at 8 p.m. Hon. Secretary: A. F. Durell, 52 Melrose Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey.

WIMBLEDON CINE CLUB has recently divided its weekly meetings into three groups—technical discussions, the screening of films from other societies, and production evenings. In this way all tastes have been catered for, and of the first mentioned, a talk on Kodachrome and an address by G. P. Kendall, Esq. were the most interesting. At the meetings when films have been screened, the Teeside Cine Club and the Bognor Regis Film Society have contributed to make the evenings a success. Mr. William R. Weedon having finished *Unknown Motive*, gave this film its première presentation at a recent Associate members meeting. This production, photographed by H. C. Bealby, contains many interesting points, worthy of note from a technical view-point.

Associate membership has now risen to over fifty since it was first introduced in the latter part of last year, and this is considered very satisfactory.

Production No. 15, *Swing Mr. Charlie* from the original story by Brian Smith, is now on the floor under the direction of the author.

The Hon. Secretary to this Club is C. W. Watkins, 79 Mostyn Road, Merton Park, S.W.19

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY FILM PRODUCTION UNIT: This Society, active in both the spheres of Production and Projection, held four meetings during February, together with a Film Ball on February 23rd. *Front Page*, *Hippocampe*, *Ether Symphony* and *Dinner News*, were shown to members on February 3rd, and on the 10th, Edward Carrick, Art Director to Criterian Films gave a talk in the Lecture Rooms, Mill Lane. *Die Ewige Maske*, *Colour Box*, *Housing Problems*, and $x+x=o$ were included in the Film Matinée at the Arts Theatre on the 17th. On February 24th, Arthur Elton, Chairman of Associated Realist Film Producers, addressed the Society. Scheduled for March showing are Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*, *Gentlemen in Top Hats*, *On the Way to Work*, *Lichtentanz*, and *On Parade*.

The Film Unit has now completed *Psychology To-day*, a one-reel (sound) documentary on applied psychology.

Hon. Secretary to this Society is Miss D. D. Hoare Nairne, of Newnham College, Cambridge.

Raw Material of Movie History

A Survey of the National Film Library's Collection

Frank Benson's Richard III —"misappropriated stage play technique"

HISTORIANS OF THE cinema are generally agreed in naming certain specific films (*The Great Train Robbery*, Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*, Wiene's *Caligari*, and so forth) as landmarks. Without disputing the value of such key-films, it is desirable to point out that too much concentration on them is liable to falsify perspective, leading implicitly to the odd belief that the early cinema progressed by an alternation of halts and sudden irrevocable forward bounds. As a corrective to this, nothing is better than a study of some of the lesser films of various periods—not key-films in the sense that they were startlingly original or artistic, but key-films from an opposite aspect, in giving us some idea of a norm of film-making at a particular time.

This *a priori* impression is confirmed and amplified by reference to some of the early films in the National Film Library. Founded less than two years ago, with a very limited capital at its disposal, this collection does not claim, from an historical point of view, to represent more than an elementary nucleus; yet even so, its potentialities in this direction are already strikingly clear. Had anything like it existed twenty years ago, we should not now be wondering whether *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, *The Covered Waggon*, or *The Last Laugh*, would ever be exhibited on any English screen again. As it is, despite the large gaps in the collection between, say, *The Great Train Robbery* (the first important story-film) and Hitchcock's *Blackmail* (the first British talkie) there is much that throws great light on the film's beginnings.

One of the most interesting points is the prevalence of colour-effects, too rarely recalled. These were not restricted to occasional primitive attempts at "realistic" two-colour processes, or to such hand-colouring as is exemplified in a French film of 1909, *The Invisible Thief*—which incidentally includes some quite ingenious trick-work—but showed themselves everywhere in the use of dyed film-stock, different scenes being toned to suggest different moods. Thus outdoor scenes would be in sepia, night-scenes in blue, fire-scenes in red, and so on.

In *Bucko McAllister* (post-war), when a man turns on a light, the colour-change is timed so as to flood the scene with yellow at the correct moment; and such a yellow-lighted interior is intercut with a night-exterior in blue, so as to give an effect of contrast almost exactly parallel to an elaborate effect at the end of the recent Technicolor picture *Dancing Pirate*. Indeed, it is difficult to say which experiment is the more successful. Again, in the French *Caeurs Meurtris* (also post-war) the colours of a single scene change several times, to give the idea of changing spot-lights directed on to a cabaret-dancer.

It is perhaps a pity that we have no copy of the John Barrymore *Jekyll and Hyde* of 1920, whose uniformly green colouring gave, I remember, a double sinister atmosphere to the incidents portrayed.

The influence of the stage cannot have appeared strongly until the end of the 1900's. Street scenes, such as those shown in some actuality-shots taken

"The Birth of a Nation"

The Assassination of President Lincoln

Raw Material of Movie History

(*Continued from previous page.*)

at about the turn of the century, bear no recognizable allegiance to any established art-form; and certain of them, in their somewhat random freedom from externally imposed restrictions, are measurably closer to present-day methods within their particular field, than are the fiction-films of a decade afterwards.

When, however, the film began to take on a first crude shape, it became excessively formalized; and an extreme instance of the misappropriated stage-play technique is provided by a two-reel production of Shakespeare's *Richard III* (1912), performed by F. R. Benson's company in the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon. The camera remained in one position throughout, and the scenes were played through in order, the meaning being conveyed (?) by exaggerated gestures. Each scene was introduced by titles: "Act so-and-so, Scene so-and-so," and a few words sketchily indicating the subject, followed by a line or two quoted from the actual text. The scenery was undisguisedly theatrical; but the costumes at least were good.

At about the same period we have the Italian Cines productions, dealing with tales of ancient Rome. Here, although much of the action was out-of-doors, the technique still fundamentally belonged to the *Richard III* school, and it is illuminating to contrast this kind of thing with an American one-reeler, *His Phantom Sweetheart*, made not more than two or three years later, but already displaying all the slick facility of the modern American cinema in embryo, with naturalistic backgrounds, neatly cut-in close-ups, intimately-handled acting (crowd-scenes are directed with some skill), and a camera which enters freely into the midst of the action instead of remaining stiffly at a distance.

Early difficulties of continuity are much in evidence, and they repay study, for some of them persist, if in slightly altered form, to the present day. Nowadays, though, we cannot overcome them by having a gentleman with a pointer to stand by the screen and elucidate, as was at one time the custom. An examination of old films is also likely to straighten out the misconception which asserts that silent films were automatically faster in tempo and more full of action than modern talkies. Often, if not always, the difference seems rather to be that in the silent film we could not hear what the characters were saying when they spoke, whereas in the talkie we can.

Note For Film Societies

Since the National Film Library aims at *preserving* films of historical value, the greater part of this material will not be available for distribution to Societies until an opportunity has occurred for making duplicate prints. Eight films of particular interest have, however, been reproduced on both 35 and 16 mm. stock, and those wishing for further details about them may be directed to apply to the British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, W.C.1. Gifts of films, or money, or both, are also, it need hardly be added, very welcome.

NEWS FROM FILM SOCIETIES

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY: A Czecho-Slovakian film of 1935, *Hey Rup*, was the chief feature of the Society's film display at the Rivoli Cinema, Rusholme, on February 14th. This film, directed by Mac Fric, also director of *Janosik*, won a prize at the Moscow World Film Exhibition last year. Though banned in France, it has been passed by the British Censor. Other films included in the same programme were *The Moon*, a French film describing the Moon's circuit of the Earth; *The Filter*, an interesting record, by Mary Field and Percy Smith, of the many stages through which water has to pass before becoming fit for human consumption, including superb photography of the growth of bacteria and the multifarious forms of plant life in the water; and *Barcelona News*, a topical film of scenes in Barcelona including a United Workers' Demonstration and the Funeral of Durrutti.

Scheduled for showing on March 14th are *Le Loup Garou* (Hunted People) directed by Friedrich Feher; the National Book Council's *Chapter and Verse*, and George Pal's *Ether Symphony*. Hon. Secretary: R. Cordwell, 86 Hulton Street, Salford, 5.

OXFORD FILM SOCIETY: *Savoy Hotel* 217, a spy melodrama set in pre-war Moscow and directed by Gustav Ucicky, headed the programme given at the eighth meeting of the season on February 7th. Two G.-B. Instructional films, *The Mine* and *The Development of English Railways*, together with Len Lye's puppet film *Birth of the Robot*, were in support. The following performance, given on February 21st, included *The Great Train Robbery* (America 1903), *Expansion of Germany* (Britain 1936), two Walt Disney cartoons, one of 1922 and one of 1934, and the Swiss film *Die Ewige Maske*, directed by Hochbaum. The last meeting of the season is on Sunday, March 7th. Hon. Secretary: E. F. Bowtell, 105 Victoria Road, Oxford.

STIRLINGSHIRE FILM SOCIETY: An address by Mr. Harry Watt, co-director of *Night Mail*, was followed by a programme of films by the G.P.O. Film Unit on Friday, February 5th. *Der Hauptmann von Koepenick* was shown to members at the Regent Cinema, Bannockburn, on Sunday, February 14th.

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY: The first exhibition of the Spring session took place on January 24th, when the programme included *Merlusse*, *Our Daily Bread*, Lotte Reiniger's *Carmen*, early newsreels, and two 16 mm. films made by Montagu Amateur Pictures—*Monty Meets Disaster*, a puppet cartoon by Mr. Arthur Greaves, F.R.P.S., and *The Day Thou Gavest*, a satirical documentary of Newcastle's Sunday, directed by Ernest Dyer and photographed by Arthur Greaves. On February 5th, John Grierson lectured to members and their friends, and on the 14th, a second exhibition of films included *Fredlös*, *The Mine*, *The Red Army*, *L'Hippocampe*, *Ali Baba*, and *The Hindoo's Charm* (an early silent film). On February 21st, Basil Wright was present to introduce and discuss *L'Atalante*, when *Song of Ceylon* and *Night on the Bare Mountain* were also shown. The Hon Secretary to this society is M. C. Pottinger, c/o Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1.

WOLVERHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY: The G.P.O. Film Unit visited the town during February and gave a special display to the Film Society of *Night Mail*, *Weather Forecast*, *Granton Trawler*, *Upstream* and 6.30 *Collection*. On February 10th the Society exhibited *Student of Prague*, *Birth of the Robot*, *L'Hippocampe*, *Brumes D'Automne* and *Coal Face*. For the March meeting *Ali Baba*, *Mediaeval Village* and *Snow Hounds* have been booked. Hon. Programme Secretary: E. L. Packer, Himley Crescent, Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton. Hon. Membership Secretary: Miss D. Roston, 60 Great Brickkiln Street, Wolverhampton.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY: At an interesting meeting held at the David Lewis Theatre on February 17th, Alberto Cavalcanti gave a lecture on "Sound in Films," illustrated by records and excerpts from English, French and American films. The following Tuesday an Extraordinary General Meeting took place in the Society's Rooms, at which it was moved that no film should be shown at any exhibition organised by the Society, except those deemed to illustrate the science of film-making, and that no part of the funds of the Society should be expended on the organisation of any exhibition having entertainment as its principal object. It was also proposed that any profit made by the Society should be used for furthering its objects and not distributed among members. Hon. Secretary: J. Alex Parker, 5 and 6 Bluecoat Chambers, Liverpool 1.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY: On February 22nd members of this Society saw a private demonstration of the new RCA Photophone Ultra-Violet Ray sound recording process, at the company's demonstration theatre, Electra House. On the following Sunday the programme given at the Monseigneur News Theatre, Strand, was headed by *Dawn*, a film made in the Irish Free State and dealing with the struggles of 1919–21. In support were *A Famous Cook at Work*, Arthur Elton's film of Marcel Boulestin, made on behalf of the Gas, Light and Coke Company, and *Russia To-day*, a graphic account of industrial development in modern Russia. On the same day, Mr. Ronald Kidd gave a talk on the Irish problem.

Hon. Secretary to this Society is H. A. Green, 8 King's Road, N.4.

The **LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY** showed Lotte Reiniger's film *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* at its February meeting. This is the only full-length silhouette film, and was shown in its entirety, with a musical accompaniment arranged by Miss Reiniger and Basil Wright. Paul Rotha's *Contact* and Cavalcanti's latest short film *Tschierva Hut* were also shown. Membership of the L.F.I.S. is steadily growing and 450 people were present. Future meetings will be held on March 7th, April 4th and May 9th. The subscription for the half season is 5*s*. 3*d*. Miss Olwen Vaughan, 4 Great Russell Street is Secretary.

BOOKING GUIDE TO SHORT FILMS

For Film Societies

Most Film Society secretaries find it a hard job to provide four or five first-class shorts for every one of their programmes during the season. There is a tendency to rely too much on the shorts imported by the London Film Society, not all of which are for various reasons suitable for some provincial audiences as secretaries have sometimes found to their cost! Secretaries could select from the following list with reasonable confidence. A further list will be published next month.

Title.	Director or Subject.	Country of Origin.	Approximate Length.	Renter.
The Bells of Belgium	Storck	Belgium	1,240 feet	Butchers
The Mascot	Starevitch	France	2,000 feet	Butchers
The Ringmaster	Starevitch	France	1,134 feet	Butchers
Shipyard	Rotha	Great Britain	2,233 feet	Gaumont-British
This was England	Field	Great Britain	1,844 feet	Gaumont-British
The Face of Britain	Rotha	Great Britain	1,730 feet	Gaumont-British
Citizens of the Future	Taylor	Great Britain	1,913 feet	Gaumont-British
Progress	Bower	Great Britain	1,667 feet	Gaumont-British
Great Cargoes	Rotha	Great Britain	2,000 feet	Gaumont-British
Industrial Britain	Flaherty	Great Britain	1,916 feet	Gaumont-British
Secrets of Life	Field	Great Britain	850 feet	Gaumont-British
The Fortress of Peace	Mt. St. Michel	France	1,400 feet	Gaumont-British
Enough to Eat?	Anstey	Great Britain	2,018 feet	Kinograph
Key to Scotland	Grierson	Great Britain	1,300 feet	Kinograph
And so to Work	Massingham	Great Britain	1,500 feet	Kinograph
Gentlemen in Top Hats	Historical	Sweden	1,000 feet	Kinograph
Night Mail	Wright & Watt	Great Britain	2,200 feet	A.B.F.D.
Weather Forecast	Spice	Great Britain	1,500 feet	A.B.F.D.
6.30 *Collection*	Watt	Great Britain	1,500 feet	A.B.F.D.
Ali Baba	Pal	France	1,100 feet	A.B.F.D.
Colour-box	Len Lye	Great Britain	500 feet	G.P.O. Film Unit
Rainbow Dance	Len Lye	Great Britain	500 feet	G.P.O. Film Unit
Joie de Vivre	Gross	France	1,100 feet	Film Society
Fox Hunt	Gross	Great Britain	800 feet	United Artists
Disney Cartoons	Disney	America	800 feet	United Artists
Bluebottles	Montagu	Great Britain	2,300 feet	Film Society
L'Hippocampe	Painlevé	France	1,500 feet	New Realm
The Bridge	Ivens	Holland	1,000 feet	Film Society
Rain	Ivens	Holland	1,000 feet	Film Society
Mar Vran	Epstein	France	2,400 feet	Film Society
Night on the Bare Mountain	Alexieff	France	900 feet	Film Society
Soap Bubbles	Dudow	Germany	3,153 feet	Film Society
Carmen	Reiniger	Germany	1,000 feet	Film Society
Little Chimney Sweep	Reiniger	Germany	1,416 feet	Film Society
Papageno	Reiniger	Germany	1,000 feet	Film Society
The Stolen Heart	Reiniger	Germany	1,100 feet	Film Society
Harlequin	Reiniger	Germany	2,500 feet	Film Society
Private Life of the Gannets	Huxley	Great Britain	1,500 feet	United Artists
Wharves and Strays	Brown	Great Britain	1,500 feet	United Artists
Nursery Island	Field	Great Britain	1,800 feet	Gaumont-British
Cover to Cover	Shaw	Great Britain	1,750 feet	A.B.F.D.
Chapter and Verse	Hawes	Great Britain	2,500 feet	N.B.C.
Way to the Sea	Holmes	Great Britain	1,500 feet	A.B.F.D.
Death on the Road	Rotha	Great Britain	800 feet	Gaumont-British
The Mine	Holmes	Great Britain	1,500 feet	Gaumont-British
Medieval Village	Field	Great Britain	1,500 feet	Gaumont-British
For All Eternity	M. Grierson	Great Britain	1,800 feet	M.G.M.
Beside the Seaside	M. Grierson	Great Britain	2,000 feet	Kinograph
Heart of the Empire	M. Grierson	Great Britain	750 feet	M.G.M.
Rooftops of London	Keene & Burnford	Great Britain	1,250 feet	M.G.M.
Statue Parade	Keene & Burnford	Great Britain	1,250 feet	M.G.M.
Contact	Rotha	Great Britain	3,000 feet	Wardour
Coalface	Cavalcanti	Great Britain	1,100 feet	A.B.F.D.
B.B.C.—Voice of Britain	Grierson	Great Britain	5,000 feet	A.B.F.D.
Lobsters	Moholy-Nagy & Mathias	Great Britain	1,250 feet	A.B.F.D.

ADDRESSES OF RENTERS REFERRED TO ABOVE.

Butchers Film Service Ltd., 175 Wardour Street, W.1; Gaumont-British Distributors, Ltd., Film House, Wardour Street, W.1; A.B.F.D., A.T.P. House, Oxford Street, W.1; Kinograph Distributors Ltd., 191 Wardour Street, W.1; G.P.O. Film Unit, 21 Soho Square, W.1; Film Society Ltd., 56 Manchester Street, W.1; Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures Ltd., 19 Great Tower Street, W.C.2; New Realm Pictures Ltd., 167 Wardour Street, W.1; National Book Council, 3 Henrietta Street, W.C.2; United Artists Corporation Ltd., Film House, Wardour Street, W.1; Wardour Films Ltd., Film House, Wardour Street, W.1

Broadcast of Christophe Colomb

(Claudel and Milhaud)

The quest of Christophe Colomb is for wholeness and the conquest of the Invisible. So says Paul Claudel of his work. And indeed he has made us feel this "wholeness" and this "Invisible"—by the most powerful imagery, by a spirit at once intimate and revelatory. The musician has come into line with these terrific concepts.

The two must never again be parted.

I believe that is the highest praise which could be given to Milhaud.

Christophe Colomb will not surprise those who have found the fine worth of this musician amid the confusion of post-War music. It will not surprise those who realised how far he was from that "art for art's sake" which so long seemed the only sure gain of modern times. They will find there the same inimitable melodic curves, giving a fresh twist to some popular song. They will find the same freedom of language, at one moment naive in its simplicity, at the next enriched by a whole complex of harmony and rhythm. These things have characterised the art of Milhaud from the beginning. They are on familiar ground. But for those who have not yet discovered Milhaud, the mere size of this work—its ambition, its touch of pathos, bring to light a musical personality of the first order.

How many modern works have brought home so strongly or to so many sympathetic hearers, a "different" music? This is a music of our own time. It does not rest, even secretly, on well-tried traditions, or on canons of art now held false.

"Christophe Colomb" brings us this "different" music. It has a frank, disturbing newness, especially in the opening scenes, and in the second part in scenes like "La conscience de Christophe Colomb" and "le Paradise de L'Idée." It is there, I think, that we must look for the core of the work. It is there that we see its newness which is rather human than musical. The composer, like his hero, is up against himself. He is up against music—against "his" music.

The more directly dramatic scenes, "Le Recrutement des caravelles," "Christophe Colomb et les marins," are more superficial, but no less striking. Their use of the spoken chorus opens up a new field of sound.

True, here and there the argument wavers through a loss of sense of proportion. True, the composer sells cheap some of the raw materials of his art (I am thinking of his cruel treatment of the human voice). True, there is occasionally a carelessness in the handling of harmony and orchestration, which tends to become aimless. But need we stress these things?

In this work we are already far ahead of the merely formal ideal, which seemed till recently the only aim for art. It is on just that inhuman perfection that Milhaud is turning his back. The man speaks in his work, and will not be stifled by the musician. If we are ever to find this "new humanism" which is hailed on all sides, the honour is to Milhaud for showing us the way.

MAURICE JAUBERT

B.B.C. Events

★Monday, March 1st, 7.30 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Cumberland Crack*. Production: Bridson. REGIONAL.

Tuesday, March 2nd, 7.50 a.m.: Fifth Test Match. Commentary from Melbourne. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, March 3rd. 8.15 p.m.: Concert from Queen's Hall. Mozart, Brahms, Schubert. Conductor: Boult. NATIONAL.

★9.30 p.m.: Feature Programme. *For All Ills*. Production: Cheatle. REGIONAL.

Thursday, March 4th, 6.40 p.m.: Play. *Patriotism Ltd.* Du Garde Peach. Production: Burnham. NATIONAL. 8.40 p.m.: Shakespeare Discussion. Val Gielgud and Alfred Hitchcock. NATIONAL.

Friday, March 5th, 4.0 p.m.: *Pig Yourself*. Famous instances of "Tu Quoque." By S. L. Ricardo. Production: Pudney. ★REGIONAL. 7.20 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Cornish Tin*. Production: Wood. NATIONAL and WEST REGIONAL.

Saturday, March 6th, 3.45 p.m.: Army *v.* Navy. Rugger. Commentary from Twickenham by Captain Wakelam. NATIONAL. 9.5 p.m.: *Madame Butterfly*, Act 2. From Sadlers Wells. REGIONAL.

Sunday, March 7th, 8.0 p.m.: Moody Centenary. Service from Lyceum Theatre. NATIONAL. 9.5 p.m.: *Old English*. By Galsworthy. Production: Sieveking. NATIONAL.

★Monday, March 8th, 9.0 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Story of News*. Production: Adam and Gilliam. REGIONAL.

Thursday, March 11th, 7.35 p.m.: *Inspiration to a Poet* (Danish Adaption). Production: Allen. NATIONAL.

Saturday, March 13th, 8.0 p.m.: *The Princess*. Short story by de la Mare. REGIONAL.

Sunday, March 14th, 9.5 p.m.: *The Blue Cross*. By Chesterton. Adapted Short Story. NATIONAL.

Monday, March 15th, 8.30 p.m.: Carroll Levis and his Discoveries. REGIONAL.

Tuesday, March 16th, 7.45 p.m.: *Ticket of Leave Man*. By Taylor. Production: Creswell. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, March 17th, 8.15 p.m.: Symphony Concert from Queen's Hall. Doktor Faust. Busoni. Conductor: Boult. NATIONAL.

Thusday, March 18th, 8.10 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Straight from the Horse's Mouth*. Production: Inglis and Morrow. NATIONAL.

Friday, March 19th, 3.0 p.m.: Grand National. Commentary from Aintree. NATIONAL.

Saturday, March 20th, 2.40 p.m.: Sports Commentary. Oxford v. Cambridge, Athletics. England v. Scotland, Rugger. NATIONAL. ★8.0 p.m.: *Francesca del Rimini*. Relayed from La Scala, Milan. REGIONAL.

★Sunday, March 21st, 7.10 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Forsaken City*. (Plague of London). Production: Allen. REGIONAL. 9.5 p.m.: Feature Programme: *The Channel*. Production: Gilliam. NATIONAL.

RADIO NOTES FOR THE MONTH

Last month *Steel* from the North Regional station; this month *Cumberland Crack* from the North, *For All Ills* from London, *Cornish Tin* from the West, *The Channel* from London, *Granite* from the West, and *The Mail Coach* from London. Seven important feature programmes in the space of a few weeks.

Steel touched a high point in B.B.C. productions. Bridson, the producer, spent weeks in the Sheffield foundries with notebook, microphone and recording van, getting the raw material for his programme. Its sense of reality was almost frightening to a Southerner. It really deserves a whole article to itself.

An odd thing to notice about feature programmes is that the champions of radio "actuality," all London producers, are turning their hands to feature programmes of historical or general interest. Witness *For All Ills*, a feature about old quack remedies and nostrums; Gilliam's *Story of News; Forsaken City*, a feature about the Plague of London. Actuality is coming from the Regions. And this is only natural because the life of the country is not to be found in the Thames Valley or in Regent Street cafés as some of the London men would imply. For music and news London is the obvious focal point, but "actuality" is to be found in Sheffield foundries, Welsh mines and the dock of the Clyde. That the B.B.C. is recognising this fact by relaying four important features from the North and West Regions is encouraging.

There are conclusions. If the North, West and Midlands are to get a bigger share of the National programmes, then so far as features are concerned London becomes a South Regional station. Why not release some of the London producers from the constant problem of having to fill up so many hours a week with something or other, and set them exploring the South with a recording van? One could suggest off hand the London Docks, cross-Channel services, old Sussex industry, and Margate for subjects.

London might then become an inspiration instead of a bugbear to Regional officials. Recording units could be installed in each Region. Instead of performing a third-rate play written by an M.P. about the Rhondda, the West might get the Rhondda to make its own programme.

B.B.C. Events (contd.)

Monday, March 22nd, 7.53 p.m.: *The Flying Dutchman*, Act 2. Relayed from State Opera House, Berlin. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, March 24th, 6.40 p.m.: *Granite*. By Clemence Dane. Production: Wood. NATIONAL.

Thursday, March 25th, 6.40 p.m.: *Wireless Puppets*. Production: Lauri Wylie. NATIONAL.

★Friday, March 26th, 8.15 p.m.: Feature Programme. *The Mail Coach*. Production: Felton. REGIONAL.

★Sunday, March 28th, 5.15 p.m.: *King Henry IV*, Part 1. By Shakespeare. Production: Creswell. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, March 30th, 8.0 p.m.: *And now Goodbye*. By James Hilton. Production: Burnham. NATIONAL.

The *Daily Mail's* campaign against the "Menace of Red Bias on the Radio" as they headline it across their main news page, has reached startling proportions. On 18 out of 25 weekdays they printed something like 10 columns of accusations against the B.B.C. The trumpeting has been loud enough and long enough to awaken some of the Tory backbenchers. The Blimps are being mobilised. Lords Bertie of Thame and Rosebery have joined the hue and cry after the 'Red' Reith and his "pink Bolshevism."

Rose Macaulay puts it well when she says, "I suppose colourless neutrality often seems, to partisans, to be bias on the side they dislike." It would seem that the *Daily Mail* will only be appeased when the B.B.C. recite atrocities by those "bloody Reds" and cheer on "Franco's noble patriots."

For the serious public a few facts will dispel any doubts the *Mail* may have set up. During the whole of last August I analysed 26 early news bulletins and found that reports of Spanish Rebel activities outnumbered Government reports by nearly three to one. On several evenings Reuter reports of Government advances were not included while Rebel activities were announced. My own opinion is that the B.B.C. expected Franco to gain an early victory last August and were preparing listeners for the final acclamation. After the British Government statement at the end of August the bulletins suddenly became scrupulously "neutral." An insurgent report had to be balanced by a Government report, and if there wasn't one available something equivalent had to be put in. Insurgent reports were and still are announced first.

Unfortunately for the millions of readers of various daily and evening papers which have propagated these fictions about Red radio the summarised facts are not available. The best corrective is for the B.B.C. to give its public the truth about the world.

* * * *

I understand that broadcasting authorities estimate that the number of licences is fast reaching saturation point. They can reckon on 8,000,000 as being about the limit. There should be some stock taking. They can rely on a steady income of from 3½ to 4 millions pounds a year. Definite allocations can be made for various types of programme. Above all, there can be something like a minimum scale of fees for speakers, actors and musicians. At present a performer has to take what he is offered. He may be getting only half the figure received by some other performer whom a B.B.C. official fancies to be more "eminent." Speakers' fees, ranging from 10 guineas a talk, are adequate. Musicians fees, from 3 guineas for a group of items, are low. Variety artists are grossly underpaid for the simple reason that once they have broadcast a joke it is dead. The radio comedian must be constantly inventing new turns. £10 a week is poor compensation for such a job. It is an astonishing fact that staff salaries are slightly more than the total year's fees to artists.

George Audit

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppets in Gaspar-color).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Slatinay and George Pal

BRIDLINGTON: Olympia	March 11,	3 days
Winter Garden	March 29,	6 days
DARLINGTON: Plaza	March 4,	3 days
FALKIRK: Salon	March 1,	6 days
FORT WILLIAM: Playhouse	March 18,	3 days
LIVERPOOL: Curzon	March 1,	3 days
LONDON: Lansdowne House, Berkeley Square	March 11,	3/4 days
SHEFFIELD: Roscoe	March 11,	3 days
SHIPLEY: Royal	March 18,	3 days
TIVERTON: Tivoli	March 1,	9 days
WALTON: Queen's	March 18,	3 days

And So to Work (A comedy of early morning rising).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Richard Massingham

DUNDEE: Regent	March 4,	3 days
FOLKESTONE: Astoria	March 7,	7 days
HYTHE: Grove	March 29,	3 days
LEIGH (Lancs): Palace	March 8,	3 days
LONDON: Cinenews, Tooting	March 18,	3 days
News Theatre, Waterloo	March 11,	3 days
Studio Two, Oxford Street	March 11,	3 days
SOUTHEND: Kursaal	March 15,	3 days
WORTHING: Rivoli	March 29,	6 days

Beside the Seaside (Documentary of South Coast resorts).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

LINCOLN: Exchange	March 1,	6 days
LONDON: World News, Praed Street	March 15,	3 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House	March 8,	3 days
NEWARK: Kinema	March 15,	3 days
SALISBURY: Picture House	March 15,	3 days
SHEFFIELD: Palace, Wincobank	March 15,	3 days

Birthplace of America (British Towns with American namesakes).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: A. Moncrieff Davidson

BENTHAM: Picture House	March 15,	2 days
BLACKPOOL: Waterloo	March 7,	4 days
BOLTON: Rialto	March 15,	6 days
BURY: Castle	March 15,	6 days
HALIFAX: Grand	March 29,	3 days
LEVENSHULME: Arcadia	March 4,	3 days
NOTTINGHAM: Imperial	March 11,	3 days
PONTEFRACT: Playhouse	March 25,	3 days
SELBY: Hippodrome	March 22,	3 days
SHIPLEY: Prince's	March 29,	6 days

Cavalcade of the Movies (in six chapters).
DISTRIBUTION: Sound City Distributors

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road		
Chapter 4	March 1,	6 days
Chapter 5	March 8,	6 days
Chapter 6	March 15,	6 days

Coal Face (Poetic treatment of coal-mining).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
SOUND PRODUCTION: Cavalcanti

BRYMBO: New Cinema	March 25,	3 days
CASTLETOWN, I.O.M.: Cosy	March 4,	3 days
DOUGLAS, I.O.M.: Regal	March 1,	3 days
DRONFIELD: Palace	March 8,	3 days
ECCLESFIELD: Cinema	March 25,	3 days
LEEDS: Abbey Cinema	March 11,	3 days
LOSSIEMOUTH: Town Hall	March 18,	3 days
PEEBLES: Playhouse	March 15,	3 days
RAMSEY, I.O.M.: Cinema	March 11,	3 days
SOUTHWELL: Ideal	March 15,	3 days

Cover to Cover (A documentary of book production).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw

BRADFORD: Theatre Royal	March 29,	6 days
BRIDGWATER: Palace	March 4,	3 days
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	March 22,	3/4 days
FOLKESTONE: Astoria	March 7,	7 days
GUERNSEY: Lyric	March 22,	3 days
HULL: Regis	March 8,	6 days
Rex	March 11,	3 days
Royalty	March 4,	3 days
JERSEY: Opera House	March 15,	3 days
LIVERPOOL: Tatler	March 4,	3/4 days
LONDON: News Theatre, Victoria	March 1,	3/4 days
NOTTINGHAM: News House	March 29,	3 days
SWINDON: Palace	March 15,	3 days

FILMS OF EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL PURPOSE
At the Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road, Saturday mornings, 12–1 o'clock.

March 6th	**Books and Music:** Shakespeare; Keyboard Talks; Mother of Parliament; Chapter and Verse
March 13th	**Food Supplies:** The Country Comes to Town; Drifters; Animal Husbandry
March 20th	**Shipping:** Gateways of the East; Gateways of the West; Dry Dock; Liner Cruising South

Enough to Eat? ("The Nutrition Film").
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: The Gas, Light and Coke Co.
DIRECTION: Edgar Anstey

CHESTER: Gaumont Palace	March 22,	6 days
LIVERPOOL: Bedford	March 15,	3 days
Magnet	March 25,	3 days
Plaza	March 11,	3 days
Rivoli	March 29,	3 days
WEYMOUTH: Belle Vue	March 4,	3 days

Fire Fighters (Documentary of the London Fire Brigade).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Peter Colin

ALTRINCHAM: Regal	March 8,	3 days
FRITH: Picture House	March 15,	3 days
HULL: West Park	March 1,	3 days
KING'S LYNN: Majestic	March 8,	6 days
LONDON: Capitol, Wembley	March 22,	6 days
King's, Wimbledon	March 22,	6 days
Pavilion, Balham	March 22,	7 days
Varieties, Hoxton	March 22,	3 days
World News, Praed Street		
MAIDSTONE: Palace	March 28,	7 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House	March 18,	3 days
STRATFORD: Imperial	March 25,	3 days
WANDSWORTH: Palace	March 22,	3 days

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns (Historical survey of European events for the past forty years).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: A. B. Svensk Filmindustri
ENGLISH VERSION: Donald Taylor

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns—(*continued.*)

BRADFORD: New Victoria	March 26,	1 day
CAMBRIDGE: Arts Theatres	March 3,	1 day
LONDON: Empire, Highgate	March 28,	4 days
NORTHAMPTON: Exchange	March 26,	1 day
PONTEFRACT: Crescent	March 8,	3 days
POTTERS BAR: Ritz	March 11,	3 days

Herculaneum and Pompeii (Two buried Cities).
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion

MANCHESTER: Tatler Theatre, Oxford Street	March 1,	6 days

Granton Trawler (A documentary of deep sea fishing).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: John Grierson

BRYMBO: New Cinema	March 15,	3 days
GOLBORNE: Jubilee	March 26,	2 days
HAYDOCK: Picturedrome	March 1,	2 days
NEW BRIGHTON: Winter Gardens	March 11,	3 days

Islands of the Bounty (Islands associated with the famous mutiny).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

BLANDFORD: Palace	March 11,	3 days
CHEADLE: Royal	March 23,	1 day
CHESTER: Music Hall	March 29,	6 days
DARLINGTON: Empire	March 8,	3 days
DARWEN: Olympia	March 29,	3 days
DONCASTER: Ritz	March 8,	6 days
GILLINGHAM: Regal	March 18,	3 days
GLASGOW: King's	March 18,	3 days
GRIMSBY: Palace	March 29,	6 days
MANCHESTER: County	March 25,	3 days
NUNEATON: Regal	March 11,	3 days
SHAFTESBURY: Savoy	March 15,	3 days
STIRLING: Picture House	March 11,	3 days

Key to Scotland (Documentary of Edinburgh).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

HELENSBURGH: Tower	March 11,	3 days
IRVINE: Palace	March 4,	3 days
LONDON: Monseigneur, Leicester Square	March 1,	3 days
Monseigneur, Strand	March 1,	3 days
News Theatre, Waterloo	March 18,	3 days
World News, Praed Street	March 25,	3 days
MOTHERWELL: Rex	March 8,	3 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: News Theatre	March 29,	6 days
RIPON: Palladium	March 11,	3 days
SOUTHEND: Kursaal	March 1,	3 days
WEYMOUTH: Belle Vue	March 15,	3 days

Lobsters (Documentary of lobsters and their habits).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
DIRECTION: L. Moholy-Nagy

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road	March 15,	6 days

Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Vernon Sewell

BRADFORD: New Victoria	March 26,	1 day
GOOLE: Palace	March 1,	3 days
HULL: Langham	March 1,	3 days
National	March 4,	3 days
LONDON: Blue Hall, Islington	March 22,	3 days
King's, Wimbledon	March 8,	6 days
Shakespeare, Lavender Hill	March 22,	7 days
World News, Praed Street	March 1,	3 days
ST. HELENS: Savoy	March 15,	6 days

Shorts (*cont.*)

Milestones (The varying types to be seen in England).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: A. Moncrieff Davidson

BANGOR: Adelphi	March 25,	3 days
BELFAST: Lyric	March 22,	3 days
BLACKPOOL: Rendezvous	March 7,	4 days
BRADFORD: Coronet	March 15,	3 days
CARDIGAN: Pavilion	March 15,	3 days
CHORLEY: Pavilion	March 17,	4 days
DUNDEE: Regent	March 25,	3 days
GORTON: New Central	March 11,	3 days
HUDDERSFIELD: Hippodrome	March 15,	6 days
HYDE: Scala	March 18,	3 days
LEVENSHULME: Arcadia	March 18,	3 days
WHITBY: Coliseum	March 25,	3 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the northward trip of the Postal Special).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Basil Wright, Harry Watt

DARLINGTON: Plaza	March 4,	3 days
SOUTHWELL: Ideal	March 4,	3 days

Secret Hiding Places (Priest holes to be found in English country houses).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Granville Squiers

ALDERSHOT: Alexandra	March 11,	3 days
BIRMINGHAM: Odeon, Warley	March 29,	6 days
BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	March 18,	3 days
FARNHAM: Regal	March 8,	3 days
HYTHE: Grove	March 29,	3 days
LEEDS: Assembly Rooms	March 29,	6 days
Majestic	March 15,	6 days
LONDON: Monseigneur, Charing Cross	March 22,	3 days
Monseigneur, Leicester Square	March 22,	3 days
Monseigneur, Piccadilly	March 22,	3 days
Monseigneur, Strand	March 22,	3 days
News Theatre, Waterloo	March 4,	3 days
LOUGHBOROUGH: Odeon	March 8,	6 days
SOUTHEND: Kursaal	March 22,	3 days
STAFFORD: Odeon	March 15,	6 days
SUTTON COLDFIELD: Odeon	March 29,	6 days

"Secrets of Life" Series (Imaginative descriptions of natural processes).
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
DIRECTION: Mary Field for G.B.I.
TECHNICAL SUPERVISION: Percy Smith

Ebb Tide
MANCHESTER: Tatler Theatre, Oxford Street March 1, 6 days

Home in the Valley
MANCHESTER: Tatler Theatre, Oxford Street March 1, 6 days

Six Thirty Collection (Documentary of West End sorting office).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Edgar Anstey, Harry Watt

CHESTER: Music Hall	March 11,	3 days
LEEDS: Abbey Cinema	March 11,	3 days
FAWDON: Empire	March 4,	3 days
SOUTHWELL: Ideal	March 8,	3 days
TOWYN: Cinema	March 11,	3 days

Spring on the Farm
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Evelyn Spice

CLACTON: Odeon	March 20,	1 day
GOLBORNE: Jubilee Cinema	March 26,	2 days
LIVERPOOL: Grand	March 20,	2 days

Weather Forecast (How information is gathered for official forecasts).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson
DIRECTION: Evelyn Spice

GOLBORNE: Jubilee	March 24,	2 days
LEEDS: Cosy	March 11,	3 days
RAWDON: Empire	March 29,	3 days
WALTHAMSTOW: Regent	March 8,	4 days

Foreign Films

Der Ammenkoenig ("King of the Nurses"—banned German comedy).
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford Street March 1, indefinitely

Ernte ("Harvest"—Austrian).
DIRECTOR: Geza von Bolvary
STARRING: Paula Wessely
LONDON: Academy, Oxford Street March 1, indefinitely

Fredlos ("Outcast"—Finnish).
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
PRODUCTION: Nordisk Films
DIRECTION: George Schneevoigt
OXFORD: Scala March 1, 6 days

Mazurka (German).
DIRECTOR: Willi Forst
STARRING: Pola Negri
LONDON: Curzon March 1, indefinitely

The Deserter (Pudovkin's first sound film—Russian).
DIRECTOR: V. I. Pudovkin
LONDON: Forum, Villiers Street March 1, indefinitely

FEATURE FILMS FOR MARCH RELEASE

Beloved Vagabond (A.B.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: Kurt Bernhardt
STARRING: Maurice Chevalier, Betty Stockfield, Margaret Lockwood, Desmond Tester

Great Ziegfeld (M.G.M.)
DIRECTOR: Robert Z. Leonard
STARRING: William Powell, Luise Rainer, Myrna Loy, Frank Morgan

Last of the Mohicans (United Artists)
DIRECTOR: George B. Seitz
STARRING: Randolph Scott, Binnie Barnes, Heather Angel, Henry Wilcoxon, Bruce Cabot

Manhatten Madness (Columbia)
DIRECTOR: Edward Ludwig
STARRING: Joel McCrea, Jean Arthur

Man in the Mirror (Twickenham)
DIRECTOR: Maurice Elvey
STARRING: Edward Everett Horton, Genevieve Tobin, Ursula Jeans, Garry Marsh, Aubrey Mather, Alistair Sim

Ramona (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Henry King
STARRING: Don Ameche, Loretta Young, Kent Taylor, Pauline Frederick

Romeo and Juliet (M.G.M.)
DIRECTOR: George Cukor
STARRING: Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard, John Barrymore, Edna May Oliver, Basil Rathbone, Ralph Forbes, Reginald Denny

Song of Freedom (British Lion)
DIRECTOR: J. Elder Wills
STARRING: Paul Robeson, Elizabeth Welch

Woman Rebels (Radio)
DIRECTOR: Mark Sandrich
STARRING: Katharine Hepburn, Herbert Marshall, Donald Crisp, Elizabeth Allan

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world FILM news
FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Three letters to the Editor

I have just realised with quite a shock that the World Film News is celebrating its first birthday. It seems to me so much like an old colleague that I have found it difficult to believe that I—and the rest of the film trade—have only had the pleasure of its friendship for a year. I don't like using a hackneyed cliche, but I think W.F.N. is entitled to be regarded as a long felt want. It gives us a service and viewpoint which no other publication does, and while I wish you many happy returns, I do not want the word "returns" to be taken in the publisher's sense of the term. Originality and straight thinking are such rare virtues in film journalism that I hope the World Film News will continue its constant growth.

S. G. RAYMENT (Editor, "Kinematograph Weekly")

I do not know which most to admire—the consistently high standard of interest and journalistic adventure maintained by World Film News, or the all-round technical flair and clever craftsmanship of the production. At least you should appreciate a testimonial from a fellow toiler in the field.

G. A. ATKINSON (Managing Editor, "The Era")

That World Film News should not only have survived its first year but should have started its second year a virile and pugnacious infant may surprise the highbrows. It will not surprise Wardour Street. The Street has had enough of the dilettante frauds who prate of montage and tempo to whom a director is a regie *and a movieola a new depilatory. All the more then it welcomes men and women who will march in step with their elders, who are ready to criticise only when they have laboured and learnt the smell of amyl acetate and drink plain bitter. World Film News has never made the precious error of being superior, or the fatal one of being a bully. It has been of the Street and not above it. It has been willing to learn from it, and ready to teach only those who have not yet graduated. Probably this is because for the most part the young men and women who run it are practical men and women, not academic theorists. With that spirit moving it survival and growth are not only likely but highly desirable.*

AUBREY FLANAGAN (Editorial Staff, "The Cinema")

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